THE VITAL FORCES OF CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

STUDIES BY MISSIONARIES TO MOSLEMS

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OF

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CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

SIX STUDIES BY MISSIONARIES TO MOSLEMS, WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE REV. S. M. ZWEMER, D.D., AND A CONCLUDING STUDY BY PROFESSOR DUNCAN B. MACDONALD, D.D.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

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PREFATORY NOTE

The studies contained in this volume appeared in successive numbers of the *International Review of Missions* and are reissued by the desire of the Continuation Committee of the World Missionary Conference. An introductory chapter has been kindly contributed by Dr. S. M. Zwemer, in which the distinctive character of these contributions to the study of Islam is made clear. It is believed that all who are concerned in missions to Moslems will find instruction and inspiration in the living experience which the studies record.

In order to facilitate the use of the book by students, a second index has been added classifying the material under the six main topics dealt with.

Acknowledgments are due to the Rev. H. U. Weitbrecht, Ph.D., D.D., for the transliteration of Arabic names and terms; to the Rev. W. H. T. Gairdner, for help in the preparation of the indexes, generously given during a short holiday; and to Miss G. A. Gollock, who has seen the volume through the press.

J. H. OLDHAM

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION OF ARABIC NAMES AND TERMS

In default of a universally recognized standard of transliteration it must suffice, for present purposes, to explain what has been accepted here as approximating to the best systems in use, without entering on minuter distinctions.

Broadly speaking, the consonants not mentioned below have the same value as in the leading European languages. Otherwise (following the order of the Arabic alphabet):

The elision of *alif* (ا) is expressed by an apostrophe, e.g. *rasūlu'llāh.*

th (ث) = English *th* in *thing.*

ḥ (ح) = a modified, deep guttural *h.*

kh (خ) = *ch* in *loch.*

dh (ذ) = *th* in *the.* (In Persia and India read as *z.*)

ṣ (ص) = modified *s.*

ẓ (ض) = modified *z.*

The Arabic letter *'ain* (ع) being unpronounceable by Europeans, is rendered by an inverted apostrophe, e.g. *sharī'a.*

gh (غ) = a voiced kh, something like the French *r grasseyé.*

ṭ (ط) and ẓ (ظ) = modified *t* and *z.*

q (ق) = a deep guttural *k* sound.

The long vowels in Arabic are :—*alif* (ا) = ā ; wāw (و) = ū ; and yāy (ى) = ī (continental value in each case). The corresponding short vowels are rendered a, u, and i (unmarked).

Exceptions are made in the case of *Allah*, *Mohammed*, *Moslem*, and *Koran*, which have become conventionalized as English words.

H. U. WEITBRECHT

INTRODUCTION

By the Rev. S. M. Zwemer, D.D., F.R.G.S., Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in America; Cairo (late of Bahrein, Persian Gulf).

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

INTRODUCTION

By the Rev. S. M. Zwemer, D.D., F.R.G.S.

All missionaries in Moslem lands and students of the Moslem problem everywhere will welcome the appearance of this series of able articles on the *Vital Forces of Christianity and Islam.* They were written for the *International Review of Missions* and are now gathered together and published in compact form to reach a still larger circle of readers. The writers of the papers were asked to supply from their own experience an answer to the following questions, without necessarily adhering exactly to the precise form in which the questions were put:

1. In your contact with Moslems, what have you found to be the elements in their faith which are really vital; i.e., which are genuinely prized as a religious help and consolation, or which tend to influence character and conduct?

2. Have you, on the other hand, found in individuals any dissatisfaction with their faith on specific points?

3. Which elements in the Christian Gospel and the Christian life have you found to possess the greatest power of appeal?

4. Which elements in Christianity awaken most opposition or create most difficulty?

5. What elements in Islam present points of contact with Christianity, and may be used by the teacher as a foundation on which to build?

6. Has your contact with Moslems shed any fresh light on the New Testament, or enlarged or altered your understanding of what is most vital and essential in the Christian faith?

The answers given are not based on theories or conjectures, but come from the school of ripe experience and of lifelong study and sympathetic understanding of Islam and of Moslems. Those that give their testimony are as strong and representative a group as it would be possible to select without increasing its number. It includes missionaries who have laboured or are still at work in Egypt, Syria, Persia, the Dutch East Indies and East Africa; an Indian convert from Islam and a distinguished student of the problem at home.

The Rev. W. H. T. Gairdner who writes the first paper has been at work among the educated Moslems of Cairo under the Church Missionary Society since 1897; he is at the head of the Cairo Study Centre for the training of missionaries to Moslems and is the author of the life of his

former colleague, Douglas Thornton, and of other works. The Rev. W. A. Shedd, D.D., has been a missionary of the Presbyterian Church of America (North) in Persia for many years and is specially conversant with the Shīʿa form of Islam. Pastor Gottfried Simon also speaks with authority, having laboured for eleven years among Mohammedans and the Batak tribes threatened by the advance of Islam in Sumatra. His contribution is, in fact, a scholarly condensation of his work, *Islam und Christentum im Kampf um die Eroberung der animistischen Heidenwelt*, which has recently appeared in an English translation. Professor Stewart Crawford, who contributes the fourth article, writes from the point of view of one who has been in close contact with Mohammedanism in Syria. He was born in the mission field and spent his boyhood among the Syrians. Then for fifteen years he engaged in itinerant work as missionary in Damascus and the Anti-Lebanon. At present he is a professor in the Syrian Protestant College. Professor Sirāju 'd Dīn of the Forman Christian College at Lahore knows by experience that the vital power of the Gospel can overcome and lead captive all the vital forces of Islam in its train. He is a convert from Mohammedanism and has had experience both in his college work and as a bazaar preacher in leading others to the living Christ. No less

authoritative is the message of the Rev. Canon Dale, Chancellor of Zanzibar Cathedral, who joined the Universities' Mission in 1889. He also writes from experience and knows both the points of contact and of contrast between Islam and Christianity. Dr. Duncan B. Macdonald, who contributes the last paper, is, as we all know, one of the foremost authorities on the history and dogma of Islam. His three important volumes on the *Development of Moslem Theology*, the *Religious Attitude and Life in Islam* and *Aspects of Islam* should be in every missionary library.

It is, of course, impossible that even so strong and representative a group of seven writers could present the whole of missionary experience or be always in perfect agreement. Nor would this be desirable. They do give us, however, foundation for future study and a consensus of opinion on the leading elements of the baffling problem, and lay down principles for its systematic study far in advance of anything hitherto attempted or available.

It is, of course, true that there is a sense in which we cannot speak of vital forces in Islam at all. In Christ alone is the life. He is the sole source and the perennial fountain of the life that is life indeed. Like all other non-Christian systems and philosophies Islam is a

dying religion. Neither the character of the Koran nor of its prophet have in them the promise or potency of life that will endure. Moreover, at the present time there are in Islam many evidences of decay. The Earl of Cromer, writing of Egypt, said: 'Reformed Islam is Islam no longer—it is something else, and we cannot yet tell what it will eventually be. . . . Christian nations may advance in civilization, freedom, and morality, in philosophy, science, and arts, but Islam stands still, and thus stationary, so far as the lessons of history avail, it will remain.' In 1899, delegates from the Moslem world assembled in Mecca and gave fourteen days 'to investigate into the causes for the decay of Islam.' Fifty-seven reasons were given, including fatalism, the opposition of science, the rejection of religious liberty, neglect of education, and inactivity due to the hopelessness of the cause itself. We find the same note of despair in the recent volume of essays by an educated Indian Moslem, S. Khuda Buksh, M.A. He speaks of the 'hideous deformity' of Moslem society and of 'the vice and immorality, the selfishness, self seeking, and hypocrisy which are corrupting it through and through.' Those who live among Moslems and read Moslem newspapers and books are more and more surprised that Islam itself is not conscious of its strength but of its weakness and decay and

that everywhere Moslems are bemoaning a day of opportunity that is lost. The Moslem pulpit and the Moslem press in the great centres of Islam unite in a wail of despair. 'O ye servants of God,' said a Cairo preacher last year, 'the time has come for Moslems to look after their affairs and to regard their religion and conduct as a sick man looks toward his remedy and the man who is drowning toward dry land.' Some months later Mohammed Al 'Aṭṭār of Al Azhar University published his essay, *Where is Islam?* in which he despairs of all reform and exposes to public gaze, in all their corrupt nakedness, the decaying forces at work in Islam. According to these physicians the patient suffers from an incurable malady. The expansion of Islam and its world-wide conquests are indeed tokens of its outward strength but it lacks inward vitality.

The writers of the papers here collected are naturally perfectly cognizant of these facts. As Christians they know that real life is found only in Christ. But they use the term 'vital forces' to describe those truths and characteristics which have for many centuries had such marvellous power over the hearts of men. The strength of any religion lies not in its bad qualities or tendencies, but in its good; not in its false teachings, but in its truths and half truths. To study Islam with sympathy, therefore, we must

seek to know where its real strength lies and what there is in its teaching that captivates the minds and hearts of *Moslems* (i.e. those surrendered to it). We must know Islam at its best that we may point Moslems to a way that is better. We must give full credit to all its elements of strength and beauty in order that we may with greater gladness and boldness present Jesus Christ, who is altogether strength and beauty, because in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge and in Him alone dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

The Moslem heart and the Moslem world have only one great need—Jesus Christ. In Him is the life and the life was the light of men. 'The fresh breath of Jesus,' as Jalālu 'd Dīn, the Moslem mystic, called it, is proving and will evermore prove the only real vital force in Moslem lands:

And granite man's heart is till grace intervene
And crushing it clothe the long barren with green.
When the fresh breath of Jesus shall touch the heart's
core,
It will live, it will breathe, it will blossom once more.

In the present conditions and opportunities that confront the Church of God throughout the whole Moslem world we face a new and grave responsibility. It can only be met by the outpouring of life in loving service, by sacrificial obedience to the last command of our Saviour, and by the

immediate sympathetic, tactful but also fearless and direct proclamation of the Gospel by word and by deed. Then will the vital forces of Christianity come to their own over against the vital forces of Islam.

FIRST STUDY

By the Rev. W. H. T. Gairdner, Church
Missionary Society; Cairo.

FIRST STUDY

By the Rev. W. H. T. Gairdner

Is the evangelization of Islam—in this or any other generation—worth while? And if so, just how is it worth while?

Of these two questions the former expresses a doubt which is entertained, with the utmost facility, by those in whom the Christian ideal of evangelization is unformed or imperfectly realized; and which cannot but suggest itself at times even to those to whom Christianity and world evangelization have become absolutely inseparable terms. These last are, and in the very nature of things must be, idealists. Starting from the tremendous premiss of the universality of Christ, which for them is paramount and of all things most certain, they apply it everywhere and to everything, seeing in each refractory phenomenon only a challenge to prove in their own lives the truth of the premiss challenged. Reasoning of this sublime *a priori* type is absolutely justifiable. It lies at the root of all that is most heroic in man—even if it is responsible for that

which is only fanatical. It accounts for his progress, won, against all seeming and in spite of the mockery of circumstance, by his faith and effort and blood—even if it also accounts for much that has thwarted progress. The question of the evangelizing of Islam, that stubbornest and most refractory of phenomena for Christian idealists, is for such minds rightly and sufficiently solved by their own all-embracing principle. And yet, if only for the sake of those whose thought is habitually suspicious of *a priori* reasoning, and who have not yet grasped the all-embracing principle of the universality of Christ, it is surely worth while to ask the second question of the two with which we started—how is the evangelizing of Islam worth while? Nay, even among those who are convinced of the universality of Christ there may well be some whose minds demand an answer to this question. History presents so many examples of the ruinous breakdown of the most heroic idealism, when it has refused to check its *a priori* reasonings by a reference to the realities of the case.

There is, indeed, for every one a reward in each honest attempt to consider steadily the phenomena that seem most flagrantly to contradict the foundation principle of his life. For the effort invariably ends in the enrichment of the principle itself. In this paper we desire to make some such attempt to answer the questions with which we started.

Such an inquiry might, of course, be conducted

on various lines; we might, for example, prove the political, or social, or general reactive benefits of Mohammedan missions, and the undesirability on general grounds of discontinuing them. Or one might point to the genuineness of those who have actually come over to the faith of Christ from Islam, and the manifest value of many of them to the Church of God. In this paper, however, it is intended to take a different line. We shall try first to discover how much in Islam seems to possess practical religious significance, as distinct from merely formal importance; and then what has been felt by some Moslems to be unsatisfactory in their own religion. This will lead us to consider Christianity with a Moslem's eyes, and to inquire, first, what aspects of Christianity arouse his antagonism —whether unjustly, because they are part of God's truth, or justly, because they arise from man's failure; and then the aspects which gain his sympathy—either because they resemble features of his own religion, or because they meet some need which his own religion fails to meet. The results of such an inquiry should afford materials for an answer to the two questions with which we started; and they will further suggest what are the aspects of the Christian message which it would appear most necessary to emphasize, realize afresh, and, it may be, rediscover, in the task of bringing that message to Islam.

The judgments passed as these various points are reviewed represent, of course, only the writer's individual opinions, based on his own observation and reflection. The results gained must therefore be defective; they may be in part erroneous. The judgments of a single individual cannot be other than defective. Only from a synthesis of such articles as this can come any real illumination upon the questions raised by our inquiry. And it is only as his personal contribution to such a synthesis, which must result from the comparison of the experience of a number of workers in the Moslem field, that the writer ventures to offer the observations and judgments contained in the present paper.

I

Not all of the vast system of Islam is religiously significant. Much of the colossal development of the canon law, for example, is, like all casuistical systems, of purely theoretic interest. Some of it has never been in anything but practical abeyance, for it represented from the first rather the theorizing or idealizing of the Mohammedan lawyers, like that of a Plato in his 'Laws,' as to what the life of a full, realized Mohammedan state or individual should be. Theoretically, of course, every Moslem carries the whole content of the canon law in his heart; actually, not every one even of the lawyers so much as carries it in his head.

The same thing applies to the system of Islamic theology and of religious ritual. Not all of it is of equal religious significance. Some of the theology is purely the property of the professional theologians, and therefore of no religious significance at all. And, in regard to ritual, it is often that which is unofficial rather than that which is officially recognized that is found religiously to matter. What strikes the superficial observer as of enormous importance often expresses formal allegiance rather than religious life.

The heart of every religion is its doctrine of God. When we strip the Mohammedan doctrine of Allah of all that is admittedly of purely theoretic interest, it would appear that what is of living significance to Moslems is their conviction that Allah is, that He is more than a principle or an 'influence not themselves,' that He is a personal force, and that He has a definite relation to the world—which includes a real, though quite inscrutable and also passionless favour towards themselves. This faith unquestionably affects the whole thinking and doing of Mohammedans. It may not always produce a particularly ethical fruit, but it is what to them matters. It gives them a steady, if stiff, *Weltanschauung*; it very often enables them to face loss, trouble, and adversity with complete stoicism. Though the length to which they have pushed deism might seem to imply a hopelessly remote deity,

their conception of the unmitigated omnipotence of Allah brings Him virtually near—for man is every way surrounded by, nay, himself exists through the immediate working of Allah's will and power. And though their conviction of the absolute 'difference' between Allah's nature and attributes and their own logically leads to complete agnosticism, they find ways through which there is given them a knowledge of Allah and the unseen world—the way of revelation through His Prophet and His book, and, as we shall see, the way of mysticism also.

Another aspect of the Moslem's religion which is unquestionably vital to him is his personal attitude to his Prophet. The clause '*Muhammadun rasūlu' llāh*,' is at least as essential and significant an article of faith to him as '*Lā ilāha illa' llāh*.' In some respects the Traditions come nearer to the life of a Mohammedan than does the Koran itself, and one does not wonder that the Egyptian peasant—if what the writer has been told is true—will sometimes refuse to perjure himself on al Bukhārī, while he will cheerfully do so on al Qur'ān. The Moslem's devotion to his Prophet, his admiration and enthusiasm, nay, his personal love for him, are intense realities. He believes that that Prophet suffered and sacrificed in loyalty to his mission. Sometimes he throws over theological or philosophical proofs of the truth of Islam, and points simply to 'the fact of Mohammed.' He feels a

personal relationship to him; he is conscious of a personal gratitude for the ineffable services he rendered. Here again comes in the importance of the Traditions, fictitious though most of them have been shown by modern criticism to be. For if, as Goldziher has pointed out in his latest work,[1] it is the Traditions that have idealized Mohammed and mitigated the primitive Arab barbarity of some aspects of his career, it is to them that we owe the fact that the pious Moslem is able to glide away from such aspects, and to emphasize to himself more genuinely ethical, more humane traits, and thus in some measure to feel his own demand for moral satisfaction met. It was this devotion to the man in the earliest days, it is this still to-day, that has made possible, if it has not actually determined, the development of Islam as a system of minute legalism and casuistry, based upon the practice of Mohammed even more than upon the word of Allah. It is indeed remarkable to reflect how Christianity, which regarded its Founder as divine, never preserved, much less invented, minutiae concerning His daily life, and so was saved from enslaving itself to a new system of law; while Islam, the very religion which arose to protest against the excessive esteeming of any man, ended by binding itself hand and foot, and for all generations, to one man's dictation in all the concerns of both private and public life.

[1] *Vorlesungen in Islam*, p. 44.

Another reality of the Moslem's religious life is his pride in Islam, its position as latest and last of the religions, its triumphs, its literature and its learning, its saints and its doctors. It is this, and his consciousness of its universality 'for black men and red,'[1] that account for another reality —his sense of the Moslem fraternity, and the many ways in which he gives expression to it in deed.

When we ask, further, what is really significant in the Moslem's spiritual life, we often find that it is not what bulks most largely to the casual observer. Every traveller to the East has been struck by the phenomenon of Moslem prayer, whether the wonderful, silent, machine-like movements of the rows of worshippers in the mosques, or the private—yet how public!—prayer of the single worshipper in the city or in the field. Personally, the writer questions whether the impression of tremendous spiritual reality thus given altogether corresponds with facts. Statutory prayer is taught to the small boy of seven as a drill, and a drill it to some extent remains. These five daily prayers are, indeed, classified as a 'work' or 'duty,' and this classification affects the whole way in which they are instinctively regarded. Not thus does the element of feeling enter into Moslem prayer. That comes in less statutory services

[1] Or 'white,' as we should say; all those whose cheeks can show a red colour.

—Koran readings at feast or fast or festivity, and above all the *dhikr*—that door which Mohammedan mysticism has opened to the world of religious emotion. It is there he feels; it is there he believes that his spirit comes in contact with the unseen and into the Presence. The attitude of the old mystics of Islam in speaking of the canonical *ṣalāt* and the uncanonical *dhikr* is typical. Al Ghazzālī is enthusiastic for the latter, in which he felt he found a road to God: the former he upholds indeed most strenuously, as a duty which must on no account be pretermitted, but a duty with aspects the utility of which, real enough he doubts not, is known only to Allah. Other mystics, too, have left *apologiae* for the official ordinances of Islam, but the very vigour they put into their task seems to show how much justificatory support they felt those ordinances needed.

As for the aesthetic element of worship, that too does not come from the silence and severity of the mosque services—even the Friday *khuṭba* is now conventional. It is the highly elaborate, ornate chanting of the Koran—an art the delight of which is born half of music and half of word—that gives him that element of aesthetic uplift which in the West is found in storied window richly dight, in pealing organ, in melodies and harmonies that thrill and uplift the soul. Does not this susceptibility of the Moslem to the reading of the Koran suggest

that beauty in the reading of prayer or scripture in our own churches might be more earnestly studied, and that opportunities lying ready to hand in this direction are not being made as full use of by us as they might easily be?

The hold which mysticism has upon Moslems, especially in the old historic countries of the East, and the reality of the part it plays in their religious lives, cannot be exaggerated. The subject demands more careful and detailed study than it has yet received, and also suggests that Christian mysticism should be more deeply studied with a view to seeing whether its message would not definitely appeal to those to whom the mystical element in religion is the most dear of all.

II

Though the Mohammedan, as a rule, simply has no eyes for the clearest defects in his own system, there are aspects of Islam which individual Moslems, at least, find to be unsatisfactory. Some of these we must now study.

As far as the present writer has observed, this dissatisfaction does not touch their doctrine of Allah, nor the soul's relation to Him. He cannot say that he has found evidence of inarticulate desire after a God of holiness and love, nor of consciences burdened by the sense of sin which nothing in Islam could relieve. To the Moslem, while still a Moslem,

these things remain undreamed of, and if there is a void here, it is not an aching one.

But it is to be believed that dissatisfaction with the moral ideal presented by Mohammed's character is already beginning to be felt by some. It is not unknown to come across Moslems who have realized that, side by side with the Traditions ascribing to the Prophet pious dictum and genial deed, there are stories which show that often he rose no higher than current Arab ideal and Arab practice. As incidents in the life of an Arab conqueror, the tales of raiding, private assassinations and public executions, perpetual enlargements of the hareem, and so forth, might be historically explicable and therefore pardonable; but it is another matter that they should be taken as a setting forth of the moral ideal for all time. It has to be borne in mind, further, that if the results of the European criticism of the Traditions penetrate into the East (and there are signs that they will not fail to find some prepared soil), the old idealizing of Mohammed will probably become more difficult; for, as we have remarked, it is in the Traditions that this idealizing takes place. The writer remembers one young Moslem of the Tradition-criticizing school saying to him: 'The important thing is to accept the Koran; it was no part of the mission of the Prophet to give a moral ideal. Accept the Koran, and then let Jesus, if you like, be better than Mohammed.'

Accept the Koran!—but already the note of dissatisfaction with that, too, can be dimly detected. Not for ever can the Mohammedan shut his eyes to the puerilities which fill so many of its pages, the contradiction between its commendation of the previous 'books' and its still unexplained disagreement with those books' contents. These and other difficulties have already caused individual Moslems dissatisfaction and doubt; and already a critical theory, unreconcilable with the form in which the book is cast (throughout, a direct address from the Deity) has been attempted in India. But of all sacred books the Koran least lends itself to such adjustment. Will its very unyielding rigidity, hitherto its strength, prove its destruction when the real strain of the testing comes?

Then again, though Moslems usually criticize Christianity for being so largely destitute of concrete, detailed commands and prohibitions, the legalistic and casuistical evolution which Islam inevitably underwent has many a time provoked dissatisfaction. The casuistry of Abū Ḥanīfa, one of the four received legists of Islam, was recently made the subject of bitter complaint in a leading article in a Cairo daily paper. The mortmain of the *sharī'a*, and the dead clutch it keeps on the freedom of social and political development, is bitterly felt and silently resented by many a reformer. The veil, polygamy, servile concubinage,

the whole position of women, the inequality lying at the root of the conception of the Moslem state —all these things are matters which reformers are burning to change, and yet must pay lip-homage to, because revelation seems to have given them their final form. The Ṣūfī or mystic movement is likewise, in some aspects, a protest against the enslavement which every system of ordinances imposes on the soul in the ethical sphere.

Such are the doubts which even now are not unknown, in one form or other, to many who know and care nothing about Christianity; and when a man leaves Islam for the faith of Christ it is generally one or other of these doubts upon which his dissatisfaction has fixed.

III

We have said that many a Moslem is dissatisfied with Islam without having the smallest leaning to Christianity. What then is his attitude towards the Christian religion when it is presented to him? In what ways does it repel or attract him?

In most respects the instinctive antipathy and antagonism of Mohammedans are as great as ever they have been these thirteen centuries. The fatal blunder of the uninstructed Arabian still produces in his millions of followers the utter repudiation of all that is distinctive in Christianity. The case is closed; they dare not look into it

again, just as they dared not in the first century of the Hijra, when, nevertheless, they were in need of information which only Jews and Christians could give them. The real figure of Jesus Christ; the fact of His death, with its ineffable beauty and endless significance; the Easter message of the empty tomb and the risen Lord; and, needless to say, His divine Sonship and oneness with the Father; the Fatherhood and its redeeming love in Christ; and the eternal Spirit of Jesus—all these truths, together with the Book that is the means of their conveyance, are still to the Moslem a stumbling-block and foolishness. There are no signs of a more sympathetic study or understanding of our faith. Deliberate ignorance or contemptuous acquaintance is still the rule. The one amelioration of the situation—and surely, by the way, this would justify missions to Islam even if they did not produce a single convert—is the fact that modern missions have at least made Moslems respect some Christians, and in them recognize, however unwillingly, the fruits of faith and love. In many a Moslem the old attitude of absolutely sincere and absolutely unmitigated contempt for the religion of the Nazarenes has perforce been modified through his respect and friendship for some Nazarenes, and his hearty admiration for their work.

The stumbling-blocks which have been named

cannot be avoided. They must be turned into stepping-stones. The doctrines in question must be presented by us, not as hard, formulated lumps of creed, but as an organic tissue of faith, warm with life and perpetually giving rise to new life. There are other stumbling-blocks, however, which are by no means so divine.

The failure of Christianity to leaven all western life, its practical, nay, its avowed abandonment by so many in France and elsewhere, are grievous hindrances to its reception in the East. Again, the indescribably divided state of the Church in eastern lands is most naturally and inevitably a real stumbling-block to the Moslem. Each little community, however insignificant, apparently ascribing to itself alone all orthodoxy, intensely aloof, and generally instinctively hostile to its neighbour; plural patriarchs for the same see, plural birthdays, passion-weeks, and Easters for the same Christ; plural altars for the members of the same Body while they live, and plural graveyards for them when they die, even in death hugging their own isolations, and elbowing each other out into the cold—what sights could be more pitifully ridiculous, if they were not such an utter shame? 'Become a Christian! which sort of Christian?' . . . 'Was your Christ born twice, and did He die twice?'—such are the questions which the Moslems ask.

There are some other, if smaller, ways in which modern Christendom places unnecessary stumbling-blocks in the way of Mohammedans. When we have such a chance to show them the secret of freedom and spirituality, combined with reverence and order, in public prayer, it is to be regretted that so often carelessness with regard to outward things on the part of Christians should give Moslems the impression of slovenliness and irreverence in worship. Then, again, the matter of ablution is one to which sufficient thought has not been given. The Englishman's principle that cleanliness is next to godliness has, indeed, enabled him to solve this delicate question at least quite as successfully as the Mohammedan, who has narrowed the scope of cleanliness while he has gone on to make what he recognizes of it part of godliness. But it behoves us to see that Christendom in the East, in general, does not fail to adopt either the one guiding principle or the other. Ceremonial ablutions may often defeat their own ends; yet this is not a matter in which, while protesting against the ceremonialism, Christians can afford to offend a scruple at the base of which lies something of permanent value.

The question of wine appears to the present writer a much more difficult one. The denunciation of wine-drinking as essentially reprehensible, in conjunction with the use of it as a sacramental

symbol, makes a contradiction so flagrant that it is not be wondered that the Moslems have stumbled at it. The terms in which the teetotal crusade is preached in the East need to be chosen with the utmost care, and unfortunately are not always so chosen. It is to be feared that in our zeal to exculpate Christianity in this matter we have but played into Mohammedan hands. In our honest endeavours to take away one stone of offence, have we dropped another in its place?

IV

We have now touched on some points in the Christian faith which inspire Islam with aversion. Is there no more genial side to the inter-relations of the two religions? Something must be said on this deeply important aspect.

It may be said that there are in Christianity aspects common to Islam, and further, aspects which the Moslem can hardly but admire, even though it be wistfully, since he cannot find them in his own religion.

We hardly need to go over again the familiar ground of the articles of the Christian creed, which are, or seem to be, identical with beliefs held by Mohammedans, such as the unity of God, the reality of revelation, and others of the greatest moment which will occur to all. There can be no doubt that, on the wise principle of advancing along

lines of least resistance, these beliefs should be emphasized in all Christian preaching, and indeed they are emphasized in every religious conversation in the East between Moslem and Christian, or at least in the tacitly understood presuppositions upon which it proceeds. Yet it may be suggested that Christians might go further along these lines. For example, the Moslem claim to be the only true unitarians should drive the Christian to preach the Unity with emphasis and significance, at the same time making it to be felt that his tri-unitarianism enriches and not embarrasses his fundamental doctrine, 'I believe in One God.' It is possible that in so doing he will have Islam to thank for recalling him from positions which he has taken up to safeguard his tri-unitarianism, but which really threaten both the one and the other aspect of his doctrine of God.

Again, it is probable that we have not profited as much as we might have done from points of contact which Islam almost involuntarily offers. Sometimes Islam seems to be groping after a truth which Christianity richly possesses. Take, for example, the strange Moslem version of the Logos doctrine, so out of keeping with the general trend of Moslem theological thought, so embarrassing to the theologian of Islam. According to this doctrine Allah had from all eternity a Word, which Word 'became' a *kitāb*—a book with a divine

message. The nature of this pre-existence; the relation of that Word in eternity to that Koran in time;[1] the question how to conceive the transition from the eternal to the temporal orders—these have proved questions metaphysically as perplexing to the Moslem as to the Christian theologian. But for that very reason they enable the latter to present the idea of the Christian Logos to the Moslem as something not inherently impossible, even if difficult of grasping; something the need of which Moslems themselves have felt, and tried to import into Islam even against the whole trend of the system; something which, just because it is so entirely in line with all Christian thought, will be found in Christianity more fully developed, and more richly satisfying by just as much as a conscious personality is of greater dignity than an impersonal book. Again, the hints dropped in the Koran and the Traditions of the special, the 'real' Presence of God locally as well as morally (in the burning bush, in the 'lowest heaven,' and the like), might be used more than they are to press home the possibility of a Real Presence in Christ, and its greater reasonableness by just so much as a sinless human body is of greater dignity than desert shrub or intermediate heaven.

[1] One standard theological text goes so far as to say that the Word in eternity might be properly, though less naturally, called 'Koran.'

In ways like these it may be discovered that that mental *praeparatio* which our Lord's first disciples undoubtedly had to enable them to receive the deeper mysteries of Christian monotheism, and which sometimes seems so hopelessly absent in Moslems, is to be found among them also, if it be carefully sought out. The Jewish ear was already attuned to the expression, 'Son of God'; to the Moslem ear, through an early misunderstanding, it is wholly repellent. But, as we have seen, the Moslem may have had some other *praeparatio evangelica*, by beginning with which the Christian evangelist may succeed in curing him of his prejudice against expressions he had previously misunderstood. And here, again, he on his part may be doing the Christian evangelist a service by unconsciously driving the latter back to the Scriptures, and compelling him to ask exactly what God meant that first generation of Jewish Christians to understand by the 'Son of God'—an expression which had been current for centuries in Jewish thought, but to which their Master had given a new and ineffable significance.

It is no contradiction to what has just been said, but rather complementary to it, to assert now that these points of resemblance between the two creeds cannot be assumed to be real identities. They are not so. If the essence of a thing lies in its essential attributes, the Moslem Allah is not the Christian

God and Father; still less is the 'Īsā of the Koran the Jesus of the Gospel. The Mohammedan idea of revelation is not the same as ours; and nothing but discomfiture can result from trying (as Christians in the East unfortunately often do try) to square the inspiration of the Scriptures with that claimed for the Koran. The same thing is true of other apparent similarities. Between the Christian and the Mohammedan conceptions there is no true identity; and yet the relationship must not be denied. It is as though an imperfect artist, after a visit to Dresden, tried to draw the face of the Sistine Madonna from memory. The result would give no true copy, not even perhaps the faintest resemblance. *Yet a true copy was what was intended.* It was to have been the Sistine Madonna and no other. And only by allowing this assumption could a wise teacher point out where and how the work had so utterly failed. Imperfect, distorted, null beyond all words to express it, may be the Mohammedan representation of our God in his Allah, of our Christ in his 'Īsā. Yet these represent his honest, his earnest attempt, and the Christian cannot but begin on that understanding, and then try to show his friend feature after feature, lovely and glorious, of the true portrait. The mental image formed by Apollos of the Christ he preached at Ephesus may have seemed to Aquila and Priscilla extraordinarily unlike the adored

3

Jesus, whom they now knew, hopelessly deficient and at points inaccurate and misleading; yet their dealing with him is summed up in that gentle remark, 'They took him and expounded unto him the way of God more carefully.' And so, while the Figure before Apollos' eyes did not move, the mists that concealed and distorted It disappeared, and Its divine glory shone full out.

The character of Christ is, indeed, something which does attract the Moslem. Is it only our faulty presentation of that Figure that explains why the Moslem, while he allows to Jesus Christ every grace, seems to turn to Mohammed when he thinks of the attribute of strength? True, the category of physical force is a veritable obsession with Islam. Yet a doubt remains: has our portraiture here done violence to the divine original? It is the same question which the revolt of the German Nietzsche in our own world and day is in so different a way pressing home upon the Church.[1] From this unworthy suspicion of weakness that Figure must be cleared. Its divine energy, exhaustless vigour, and resistless power must be given their proper emphasis: *Ecce Vir!*:—not the less, but all the more so, because He was

[1] It is not an accident that writers of this school sometimes show a tendency to laud Islam. Bernard Shaw, in his play, *Getting Married*, makes one of his characters express the opinion that the future religion of Europe may well be a sort of 'reformed Mohammedanism.'

so perfectly gentle with little children, so uncondescendingly courteous to women; so understanding with the weak and with the fallen, and so tender in every relation of friendship and love: *Ecce Homo!* And the story of His Passion may not, and must not, be represented in the telling as feeble passivity. Rather must that one idea, insisted on by the master-hand which drew the picture in the Fourth Gospel, be insisted on also by us, namely, that through and in every detail He was royal and divine, proving in His own insulted body that the weakness of God is both more majestic and stronger than the strength of man: *Ecce Rex!* What, in fact, but very strength itself could have given and left His royalty as the uppermost impression, after a night and a day of unresisted mishandling? The action of the Passion! The activity of its passiveness!

The character of Christ, then, does attract the Mohammedan, and will do so more and more. Many a Moslem, when he has fairly placed it alongside of the character of Mohammed, has seen the immeasurable difference—one which is not diminished even when one allows to the latter all the virtues that can honestly be claimed for him. One cannot measure the importance of this fact, if the question at issue between the two faiths tends in the future to resolve itself more and more into a conflict between two ethical ideals, as lying at the root of the difference between two theologies.

There is just one feature of the doctrine of Christ which does seem to have an attraction of its own for Moslems. They, rejecting His death, are all the more forward to acclaim His ascension (or 'elevation' as they call it), and to listen with eager curiosity, and sometimes with real assent, when they are led on from that to His living and perpetual intercession. The contrast between their dead Prophet, lying in his splendid tomb in al Medina, and the Christ who passed into the heavens alive, sometimes strikes them very forcibly. Many a simple Moslem man and woman has, even without definitely quitting Islam, found the sheet-anchor of a new life of faith in the one thought: 'The dead Prophet, the living Intercessor.'

Other features of Christianity which often undeniably attract Moslems can be only briefly noticed. The ethical freedom of the religion of Christ has been already mentioned, with the consequent absence of casuistical rules for the individual, and cramping regulations for the social and political life. But not many Moslems have had this revealed to them yet. The freedom, purposefulness, intimacy, and simplicity of Christian prayer is another such feature. It is totally different in its whole scope and aim from the Moslem's *ṣalāt*; ampler than his quite undeveloped *du'ā*; saner and ampler than his *dhikr*. And as such it ought to impress all Moslems who witness it; as such it indeed does impress some of

them. The ideal and the practice of Christian love, forgiveness, truthfulness, and chastity have time and again extorted the admiration of Mohammedans when they have witnessed them. The enterprise of Christian missions, the unheard-of privations and heroisms of pioneers amid the arctic cold and darkness or the awful circumstances of African barbarism, arouse in them wonder and ready praise, and are a real witness to the divinity of Christianity, or at least a standing disproof of their theory of its total corruption and falsity. The life of the Christian family, when they see it; Christian womanhood, calm, capable, womanly, gracious, self-controlled—this, too, fills them with wonder. They know Islam has never produced such women; they know it is not producing them to-day; they strive to ascribe the overwhelming difference to custom, race, education—any reason that can be found. It seems impossible but that some of them have an inkling of the truth that Mohammed adopted and stereotyped the Arab conception of woman, which was fundamentally and finally sexual; while Jesus Christ, by the silent action of a lifetime, laid the first emphasis on the identity of her humanity rather than on the difference of her sex, thus both dignifying her and man in his attitude to her.

In regard to the more theological aspects of Christianity, the writer is unable to say that any Christian conception naturally attracts Moslems,

or appeals to any conscious craving on their part. It is only when for one cause or other a Moslem's faith in Islam is shaken, and he finds a home in Christianity, that very gradually his thoughts about God expand and demand to find in Him what only Christ has ever revealed.

V

It will have become already fairly clear what aspects of the Christian faith it seems to the present writer need most strongly to be emphasized; what aspects, we might say, Islam teaches us to emphasize, to realize afresh, in some cases, perhaps, even to rediscover. In this final section we shall try to gather together and complete suggestions that have already been made in the preceding pages.

The unity of God needs to be emphasized afresh. Some presentations of the Atonement that were distressingly suggestive of tritheism, even to the extent of asserting the existence of differences of ethical character within the Godhead, may be henceforth buried, surely unlamented. The emphasis on the Unity makes the Incarnation and Atonement much more divine because much more God's acts. 'God so loved the world . . .' 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself . . .' And the more they are realized as God's sole acts, the greater and more significant they appear.

Moreover, until the divine Unity has been

grasped and re-emphasized, the enriching effect, the real value of the revelation of Father, Son, and Spirit, cannot be felt. To find love, and social life, and relations of reciprocal joy in the very heart of Godhead is surely to be assured for ever of the personality of God, and to be made secure from the negations of deism on one side and pantheism on the other, into both of which Moslem thought tends constantly to fall. It means, too, the final redemption of our conception of God from mere barren sovereignty, loveless and unloved; from the revolting callousness of absolutism, with its arbitrary cruelties and favours, an absolutism no more worthy of man's gratitude or respect than that of Setebos as conceived by Caliban—a conception, nevertheless, which is normal and invariable in Moslem thought.

We have already seen that the real attraction which mysticism has for Mohammedans is a call to the Christian Church. If mysticism had at first some difficulty in finding its way into the Moslem scheme, and if the reconciliation of Ṣūfī *dhikr* with canonical *ṣalāt* once caused embarrassment, no such difficulty existed in Christianity, for which the two words EN CHRISTO enshrined a divine mysticism in the heart of religion from the very outset, and which was unembarrassed by the formal rigidities of Islam. Do not these facts constitute a call to the Christian Church more deeply to experience all that lies EN CHRISTO, and further to attempt to

interpret and preach that experience to Mohammedans? Let a Christian Sufiism appeal to the heart of the Sufiism of Islam.

Islam, again, alike by the shallowness of its ethical conceptions of Allah, and the consequent shallowness of its ethical doctrine of man, drives us to emphasize and realize afresh those two burning attributes of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—His holiness and His love. From these two, each the obverse of the other, follows as by divine naturalness and necessity that self-sacrifice of love to save the sinner from his sin which we call the Atonement. And Islam, as we have seen, by its uncompromising insistence on the Unity, helps us to find the love and the action of God at the beginning, middle, and end of the entire redemptive work, both for the race and the individual.

Islam with its obsession for the category of power and force compels Christian thought to see more clearly the bearing of its own fundamental assertions. All power must indeed be ascribed unto God—but what power? The reaction against the barren Moslem doctrine of omnipotence leads us to perceive that physical omnipotence is as feeble a category, ethically, as either brute force or mechanical power; that ethical omnipotence, in certain moments of its work, may well seem to spell weakness in the physical sphere; that, nevertheless, the weakness of God is stronger than the strength

of man; and that the Cross was the victory of a distinctively divine and distinctively human strength, which the living glow and splendour of the Resurrection did but vindicate and demonstrate. We have already seen how Islam, like some modern philosophies, makes us study once more the inexhaustible portrait of the Lord Jesus Christ, and find in every feature of its strength, life and energy divine; a strength of which His gentleness was the ideal obverse; and which transmuted the very types of utmost earthly indignity into circumstances of royalty itself.

From Islam, too, we may gain a clearer realization that it behoved Him, the principle of whose life was self-communication, to have for all eternity a conscious Word, and no mere unconscious principle or attribute; One who in that inscrutable 'becoming' (which after all merely expresses the oncoming of eternity on time) 'became flesh,' perfect man in the image of God; whose 'words' are not, like the limited vocables of the Koran, collected between the two covers of a book, but are rather the total self-expression of a perfect life, which never spoke more eloquently than in the perfect silence of His sacrifice. The limited Koran against the limitless Christ!

In the religious ethical life we have already seen what qualities appeal strongly to Moslems, and what by the grace of God the Church must show forth. But one word may be added. In all the perplexities

of the problem of sex, both social and individual, one thing stands out clear—that the incessant sounding of the sexual note in the Koran, the Traditions, the canon law, and in the poetry, literature, theology, and entire system of Islam, tends to make impossible the highest individual, family, or social life, and defeats the very ends it appears to have had in view. In its attitude of man to woman, of woman to man, Islam seems to us to have hopelessly missed both dignity and beauty, and to be far from having secured happiness; and that because it has made woman in every way a prisoner of sex, and thus has shut up man to a merely sexual way of regarding her. Islam claims, on the other hand, to have accommodated itself to the facts of human nature, and, like certain modern philosophies of the West, accuses Christianity of having sinned against human nature in having commanded impossible renunciations. Such accusations may indeed lead Christianity to take stock of itself, and to see whether its true assertion of the paramount necessity and possibility of self-discipline may have led to negations and abnegations which are no part of the message of Him in whom the totality of human nature was sanctified. But apart from the corrective of exaggerations to which criticism may lead, the fact remains unshaken that the relation of man to woman and of woman to man which was made possible by Jesus Christ, is in truth the sanest as well as the

purest, the strongest and the richest and the most perfectly human. The Spirit of Jesus teaches that the highest and the happiest solution of the sex problem is won in the out-and-out acceptance of the subordination of impulse to self-discipline; and that this unstrained self-discipline, in which alone impulse itself finds its true human interpretation and God-ordained satisfaction, is made possible by Jesus Christ for whoever wills its possibility, without any despairing negation or abnegation whatsoever.

The Spirit of Jesus—in this word all that we have been trying to express in this concluding section is summed up. Only that Spirit can avail with Islam. And yet, it is because the Church, whose one sole asset that Spirit is, needs in every generation to rediscover His fulness—it is because of this that she may perhaps learn some lesson from her great antagonist, perhaps see that antagonist unconsciously motioning her towards aspects of His fulness which otherwise, it may be, might have escaped her eyes.

SECOND STUDY

By the Rev. W. A. Shedd, D.D., Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.; Urumia, Persia.

SECOND STUDY

By the Rev. W. A. Shedd, D.D.

The purpose of this paper is to reproduce the impression received during residence in a Moslem land from contact with Mohammedans in school work, religious discussion, social intercourse, and the various affairs of daily life. It is not an attempt to maintain a thesis, or to give an account of any phase of missionary work, or even to give the writer's final conclusions. He has sought to be frank and sympathetic in his relations with Mohammedans, among whom he feels it an honour to count not a few friends, and the effort will be to be candid in this attempted transcript of his impressions. In the nature of the case specific proofs cannot be cited for every statement. The range of observation is limited to one country and mainly to a single province, and to the smaller of the two great divisions of Islam, viz., to the Shī'a Mohammedans of the province of Azerbaijan in Persia. The paper is in part also an attempt to describe the attitude of Mohammedans towards

their own religion and towards Christianity. This again, in the very nature of the case, is very difficult to do with fairness. In one respect there is perhaps danger of over-estimating the difficulty. The profoundness of the difference between the East and the West in their views of truth and attitude towards life has been a favourite subject of writers on Asiatic matters. No one can live in the East and attempt to enter into eastern life without again and again being baffled by the different point of view from which Asiatics look at things; but the conviction has grown in the writer's mind with the experience of passing years that the chasm is not impassable by any means. The theory that the race is divided into sections which are mutually inaccessible in intellectual and spiritual things is refuted by the whole trend of modern history. The social ideals of the West are penetrating the East and are laying hold of the masses in those lands. Under these conditions one has a right to expect that the religious ideas that have inspired Europe and America may be so presented in their inherent power that they may lay hold on the Mohammedan world.

I

What is the Moslem's attitude to his own religion? Which are the elements that hold him with living power, and which are those whose hold

is weak or which he would throw off? Two preliminary remarks may be made. Obviously one must beware of universal statements. Mohammedans vary, as do Christians, in temperament and in education. A doctrine or a practice that holds one man with a powerful attraction may be repellent to another. In the second place, tendencies of thought and of theological development may be more significant than outspoken praise or blame. The former may be the unconscious expression of a deep need on the part of many, while the latter may represent the passing mood of a few. Usually the former is the summing up of a much larger experience than the latter.

Faith in one living God is certainly an element with living power. There are a good many sceptics in Persia but there are very few atheists. The language of everyday life is saturated with the acknowledgment of the living power of God. Most of the phrases, such as 'If God will,' 'Praise be to God,' 'God forbid,' are thoughtless expressions of habit and not acts of conscious faith; and yet custom in its origin is crystallized conviction, and if the conviction is lost the custom will pass into disuse. Besides, there are other evidences for the faith. There are very few suicides in Moslem lands, and that not because life is easy and men are contented. The reason is that the hereafter and the judgment are too vividly real for men to take liberties of

that sort. The writer was talking not long since with a Moslem in a railway carriage in Russia and the conversation turned on recent political changes in Persia. The Moslem said that he believed that the Russian intervention was the means used by God to cast down the oppressors and to relieve the oppressed. It was not the expression of assumed piety but of a real conviction. Another Moslem was in the habit of saying that life's contrarieties prove God's existence, meaning that the thwarting of our wills is the evidence of a higher will. Islam assumes, and men assume in their daily lives, that this living God has a direct relation to men. He has sent a line of great prophets who have revealed His will for man in the form of law. He accepts worship and He hears prayer. Fatalism is not the ruling conception of the universe among Persian Shī'ite Moslems. The feeling of helplessness in the hands of an all-powerful Ruler is not absent, but it is softened both in theology and in popular feeling. What may be called the feeling that God is good-natured is very common. 'God is gracious (*karīm*)' is a very common expression, and the idea seems to be that He is not vindictive and will pass over little faults, especially in Mohammedans. The Nestorian Christian in an exactly similar way falls back on the expression, 'God is merciful.' In both instances the effect on morality is disastrous. The value of the faith in

God's living power is limited by the defects in the character of God as conceived by Moslems, but the faith itself enters into life in innumerable ways.

The legalistic idea of merit plays a large part in life. This is the idea that certain acts, either those prescribed by the law or endorsed by religious custom, such as the fast and the various pilgrimages, or acts of mercy, are reckoned by God to the advantage of the doer. Theoretically the motive of the act enters into the reckoning of merit; but practically this element has a very small part in it, so that one may say that in the popular idea the reward is not based on the ethical character of the act but is in large measure arbitrary. The thousands of pilgrims who every year go to the shrines and above all to Kerbala, the general observance of the Ramadhān fast, the unintelligent reading of the Arabic Koran, the building of bridges, the indiscriminate giving of alms, and the support of religious mendicants are evidences of the power of this conception. No religious force works in more ways and more universally than this.

In Persia, faith in the Imāmat is another almost universal force. This implies that God not only reveals His will through the prophets but is in a more or less clearly defined way actually present in human life in some person, pre-eminently in the line of the Imāms, 'Alī and his descendants. This

faith works out in various sects in manifold ways. It lay at the bases of the claims of Sayyid 'Alī Mohammed, the Bāb, and of his more famous successor, Bahāu'llāh. Around Lake Urumia in recent years a sect has gathered about the person of a religious teacher in Maragha, who claimed to be in some sense the resting-place of the divine presence. It is startling, perhaps, but thoroughly typical, to be told by a watchmaker in his dingy little shop in the bazaar, after a discussion of the alleged necessity of the presence of a representative of the Twelfth Imām, 'I am He,' i.e., 'I am the one in whom for this time and place this divine presence is to be found.' Such sects appear and disappear with each generation. Among the 'Alī Ilāhīs, an ancient heretical sect and by far the most numerous of them all, the divine power is centered in the Pīrs, as their religious heads are called. The honour paid by the Persians to the Sayyids is connected with this belief, as they all claim descent from 'Alī. It covers and excuses a vast amount of rascality and rapacity.

Probably no Roman Catholic calls more instinctively on the Virgin and the saints for help than does a Shī'ite Moslem on the Imāms. The writer was once becalmed on the Lake of Urumia and the passengers, under the leadership of a lusty Sayyid, relieved the monotony of the hot and tiresome delay by praying for a wind. All in chorus would

implore help from the great prophets and the Imāms, calling on each one in turn.

Closely allied to this belief is another religious force that is exceedingly strong among the people here. This is allegiance to a personal guide. It is the principle about which the dervish orders and the more irregular religious devotees cluster. The practices, such as the *dhikrs*, in which the attempt is made to secure a mystical union with the divine through an emotional or sub-conscious bond, are carried on under the personal leadership of a *murshid*. The religion of the Kurds, who are Sunnis and not Shīʿas, has for one of its main principles allegiance to their shaikhs, by whom they swear and to whom they do abject reverence. This allegiance is not tribal nor wholly hereditary, and to some extent it is voluntary, i.e., the individual chooses the religious leader whom he accepts. The authority descends more or less from father to son, but it is based originally on a reputation for ascetic holiness and devotion to religion. These shaikhs are, in many cases at least, descended from the Sayyids, or reputed descendants of the Prophet. The idea of personal authority underlies the ecclesiastical organization in Persian Islam, if it can properly be called an organization. There is no formal hierarchy, although the authority of the *mujtahids*, or accepted expounders of the law, is very great. The basis of the authority in practice, if not in theory, is democratic, and the

measure of a *mujtahid's* authority is largely the amount and character of his popular following. Certain places, especially sacred shrines like Kerbala and Meshed and to a less extent cities of political importance, are recognized as sees of religious authority; but the choice of the occupant of any given see is exceedingly irregular and democratic. Acquaintance with a Persian will often reveal the fact that he is the disciple (*murīd*) of some *mujtahid*, or it may be of a less authorized religious teacher, whom he regards as in a special sense his religious director and teacher. This element of personal influence is in accordance with the whole scheme of life, in which favour accorded on the basis of friendship and acquaintance plays a great part. The shopkeeper as a personal favour will change his price and the official will for your sake grant what is only your right. In civil life men will often put themselves under the protection of some powerful man, who has no legal claim on their allegiance, and he will accept them as his protégés. In religion this idea is found in the mediatorship of the prophets and holy men with Mohammed at their head, for whose sake the Ruler of the universe grants favours and forgives sin.

It will be noted that the religious forces named do not all strictly belong to Islam. A full account would include a great mass of belief in magic, evil eye, charms, shrines, fortune-tellers, and such like,

which cannot be described briefly and yet play a large part in the religious life of the people. For example, in the city where the writer lives one of the principal figures is a woman, a Jewish proselyte to Islam, who is something of a ventriloquist and evidently very shrewd. She claims to have a spirit at her service whom she calls Mohammed, who finds lost articles, gives information as to absent relatives, or foretells the future. She is consulted by all classes, including many Christians. Similarly Christian shrines are visited by Moslems to secure the favour of the patron saint. In a more intellectual way eclecticism is a living force. The tendency among many who are weary of the burdens and frivolities of traditional Islam is to fall back on a more or less vague theism, which is taken as the common foundation of the great religions. One is often told that the revelation is the same, though the mediums of revelation vary, that the actor is the same, though the mask and voice are changed. This has a basis in the claim of Mohammed that his message is the same in substance as that of Abraham and succeeding prophets. It is often joined with faith in some special religious leader, who claims to guide men anew in the one way of life.

II

Dissatisfaction with Islam may be traced along two lines. One is the expressed statements of

individuals, and the other the attempt to supply deficiencies by importing and developing practices from without. Perhaps the second is the more significant. The most outspoken complaint is against the mullās and traditional practices favoured by them. A cartoon in a paper published in Turkish by Moslems of Tiflis pictures the old and new eras. In the former a mullā is pulling a crowd of men along by a rope, while in the latter the rope is broken and the mullā is tumbling headlong. A Mohammedan recently made the statement that in certain regions to call a man an *ākhūnd* (or preacher) is equivalent to reviling him. This is a revolt against abuses that are capable of reform without touching the essence of the faith. The nationalist revival in Persia leads occasionally to revolt against Islam as a foreign religion imposed on Persia by conquerors. An expression of this feeling in a newspaper was the cause of its suppression. There is complaint against the minute and vexatious requirements of the law, which expresses itself largely in the neglect of those requirements. There is a growing looseness in the keeping of the fast, though the breach is mainly in private and not in public. A zealous progressive suggested in his newspaper the abolition of the veil for women, with the result that he stayed a long time in prison. This complaint against the law strikes at one of the fundamentals of the religion; for while the law may

be drastically pruned without touching the Koran, its roots and some of its branches are in the holy book. Bābism, or Bahāism, is largely an expression of this dissatisfaction, which it meets not by doing away with ritual law but by substituting a new law for the old. Any attempt to establish legislative government is bound to accentuate this conflict, for the idea of Islam is that government is not established to make law, but to enforce the already existing sacred law, which covers all departments of life.

An element of apparent strength in Islam is the brevity and simplicity of its creed and the way of salvation it offers. This is an apparent element of strength, because there is a great latitude of freedom, provided only the articles of faith are professed. The Mohammedanism of the schools is supplemented by a multitude of beliefs and practices, which are for the most part not Mohammedan in origin; and even the scholastic theology, through the medium or under cover of the traditions, has incorporated foreign elements. Almost any sect is tolerated in Persia, provided only that the creed, the fast, and a few other matters are respected so far as outward profession is concerned. The history of the incorporation of Sufiism and the theory and practice of mysticism are to the point. These sentences are being written on the tenth of Muḥarram, the anniversary of the tragedy of Kerbala, in the mind

of the Shī'ites the great martyrdom of history. From the city come the sounds of the mourning processions that pass along the streets, and they bring to the imagination the long lines of men and boys beating and cutting themselves in token of their participation in the grief of the tragedy. To-day is the great day, but for ten days private and public life has been subordinated to the same religious purpose. Sermons, poems, theatrical representations, and religious symbolism have all kept before the mind the day of Kerbala. This is the great religious demonstration of the year and also the national and patriotic celebration. Not only in its historical basis is it later than Mohammed but in its theological idea it is not Koranic. The bases on which it rests are the Imāmat and atonement through suffering, the abiding presence of the divine in humanity and forgiveness based on propitiation. It is an attempt to meet the deep needs of the human heart which were ignored by the Prophet, and to make of Islam a national faith in spite of the Arabs who murdered the descendants of the Prophet. Strangely enough the fiercest partisans of the house of 'Alī and the most fanatical patriots are Turkish subjects of Persia, who nevertheless claim the heritage of Iran and not of Turan. The civilized and irreligious Persian may scoff at the ceremonies of Muḥarram, or grumblingly make public compliance to its demands, but it is the

central fact in religion for the vast majority of Persian Shī'ites. The preaching in the village mosques mainly concerns itself with the story of the Imāms and bases the hope of salvation on their sufferings. Surely here is a deep and widespread, though unconscious, dissatisfaction, which in order to meet its need has created a myth and founded a national cult.

III

The attempt may next be made to determine the attitude of the Mohammedan to Christianity, and to see how contact with it affects him. He is brought up to look on Christianity as a religion whose day is past, or possibly as one that answers well enough for the Christians but which is inferior to Islam. The question between Islam and Christianity was closed long ago by the Prophet and sealed by the victories of the former. Islam was predicted, he believes, by Jesus Christ, and the failure to accept it is due partly to the fact that the true *Injīl* was taken to heaven, and what remains is a book of distorted traditions. New light may arise for Islam by the coming of the Imām Mahdī or by some working of the hidden Imām, but not from Christianity. This assured position is shaken perhaps by the discovery that among some Christians there is a degree of truthfulness and unselfish service, such as he has not

found in Islam; while further acquaintance may reveal to him that his ideas as to the beliefs of Christianity were largely erroneous, for example, that the Trinity is not three separate Persons, two of whom were of human origin, and that Christ is not regarded as the Son of God in the sense that he had supposed. On the other hand, the superficial contact of a Mohammedan with Christians may have a repellent influence. Most of them meet him only in trade and their object is to get the best of him in a bargain. Others, it may be, are representatives of European Powers, which according to his belief are set on exploiting if not destroying his nation. Western social habits are such as to be misunderstood and often to cause baseless scandal. To his mind many of the Europeans whom he knows seem to be destitute of religion. A Persian who professes no religion and whose language is devoid of religious expressions is practically unknown, although his profession may be very different from his actual belief. The mutual recriminations of Christians of different sects have their share in strengthening his prejudices against all, though he has too often heard the tradition that there will be seventy-two or seventy-three sects in Islam to regard division as much of an argument against a religion. The above is not a complete statement of the difficulties that lie in the way of a Moslem giving to Christianity a fair

hearing. The fear of the consequences of conversion, caused by the intolerance of Islam, is an important element. Ignorance, prejudice, contempt of subject races, misunderstanding, suspicion, fanatical pride, and the effect of the sins, errors, and lack of tact on the part of Christians help to pile up obstacles.

Other difficulties come up when he gives to Christianity a hearing. The doctrines of the Trinity and of the deity of our Lord have been obstacles from the time of the Koran, and they are often made more difficult by the manner of their presentation. If he is persuaded to read the New Testament, he may find new difficulties in the form of the book, which is so unlike his idea of what a sacred book should be. He may be struck with the absence of law, which he has been taught is the object above all others of revelation. He has been taught that Christ was not really crucified, and so he is puzzled by the story of the crucifixion and the resurrection. The composite authorship of the book is also against his preconceived ideas. Possibly, too, the Christians seem to him in their informal references to the Bible and unconventional use of it not to show the reverence due to a divine book. His whole conception of religion is very different from the Christian conception. He has been taught—and even liberal Moslems seem to believe it—that in the Koran are to be found science, jurisprudence,

politics, social ethics, and all else that enters into human life. The present leader of the Bahāīs, 'Abbās Effendi, states this idea of religion very definitely in relation to the Manifestation or Educator, whose guidance is to include by way of definite instruction every sphere of life. New Testament Christianity makes no such claim. It is a gospel, centred in the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The miraculous element in the life is not a difficulty to the Moslem. Much in the teaching he cannot but admire, though the form is not what he expects. The chief offence is the cross. Recently I looked over some popular religious manuals published in the Transcaucasian (or Azerbaijan) Turkish by the more progressive Moslems. In them the story of Jesus is that founded on the suggestion of the Koran that He was rescued by God from death, some one else dying in His stead. The New Testament says that Christ died for sinners, willingly offering Himself. The Moslem says that a sinner died unwillingly in Christ's stead. For the glory of sacrifice the Moslem substitutes an escape wrought by God. This is done not out of perverseness, but from a desire to honour the Lord Jesus by saving Him from the shame of the cross. Little wonder that the epistles do not appeal with power to Moslems, for they are saturated with faith in the death of Jesus. The

conception of religion is different, and with this go different conceptions of salvation, of sin, and of forgiveness. The evangelical Christian and the Moslem move religiously on different planes.

Another difficulty lies in the sphere of character and ethical practice. The most deep-seated demoralization in Persian character is the result of the intolerance of Islam. Very possibly it goes back to the rule of the Zoroastrian clergy under the Sassanian kings, but at all events it was intensified by the Arab conquest. One may believe that the conception of an almighty and living God preached with the force of faith was a great factor in the conquest of Persia by Islam; but the sword was the most prominent factor and there must have been much insincere profession. As time passed and the irresistible speculativeness of the Persian mind produced variations of doctrine, some of them revolutionary in character, the insincerity became more widespread, particularly among the intellectuals. Finally Shī'ite Islam formally recognized the rightfulness of insincere profession; and this theory of ethics is accepted by every Persian sect, including the Bahāīs, and is practised by all. The greatest difficulty in presenting truth to a Persian is not the separation in intellectual conceptions and religious ideals, but the lack of sincerity and frankness in all religious intercourse. Christianity must not and cannot meet men on any

basis but that of truthfulness, and that common meeting-place is hard to secure in Persia. This insincerity may be covered by politeness, affability, and intellectual acuteness, but at bottom it is stubborn and ugly.

IV

The solvent that removes the prejudices of Moslems is love expressed in beneficent deeds and in unselfish character. Probably the greatest work that Christian missions have done in Mohammedan lands is to present in life and deed the fruits of Christianity. Hospitals, schools, relief of poverty, and integrity and honour in daily life have presented a new idea of service, religion, and manhood. This ideal differs from that of the saints of Islam. The position of woman in the Christian home and society has an attraction, especially for women. Many of them realize something of the evils caused by polygamy and divorce, and in general the relation of the sexes is so different in the two religions that the contrast cannot but be striking. More important than institutional Christianity is the influence of personal character in the social relations of life. Just what this has meant in Persia is shown in the biography of Dr. Cochran[1]

[1] *The Foreign Doctor:* A Biography of Joseph Plumb Cochran, M.D., of Persia. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1911.

by Dr. Robert E. Speer. After his death Dr. Cochran's character was lauded by one of the most orthodox preachers in Urumia in a sermon in the mosque, and no one can tell how many prejudices were softened by that life of sincere service. The solvent that will remove the mass of misconception and mis-information is knowledge imparted in as non-controversial a way as possible. Much is being done to accomplish this indirectly, but there is need also for direct efforts in this direction. Not long since a mullā was for a few months a patient in a missionary hospital. He was a preacher of considerable reputation in his home city, and so he would influence the opinion of others as to Christianity. Before he left he asked for several copies of a little book that states in an uncontroversial way the doctrines of evangelical Christianity, in order that he might show his Moslem friends how erroneous were their ideas of the Christian religion. The social and political results of Christianity are far less effective than its manifestation in personal character. For one thing, the Oriental has not learned to judge religion by such standards, and besides, the faults and shortcomings of western civilization are obtruded on his view. Influences from the West are tending to undermine Islam and are producing scepticism and materialism, and the most constructive of them is the missionary influence.

The purity and nobility of the moral ideas set

forth in the teachings of Jesus attract some. A teacher of Moslem theology of some prominence once remarked to the writer that he believed that the teacher *par excellence* of morals and manhood is Jesus Christ. Some sayings, such as those about marriage, are criticized as impracticable, but nevertheless the attraction of the ideal is great. Another attractive element in the ethical character of Christianity is its adaptability to progress and freedom, because its ethics are not embodied in a legal code and because religion in its origins is not tied up with government. Argument along this line at least gains a respectful hearing. Some see that church and state in Islam are inseparable, or separable only under non-Moslem rule, and that this is a great obstacle to social progress. The contrast on this point between Christ and Mohammed can be very helpful. One young man of uncommon purity of character was attracted to Christianity by the contrast between the sensual paradise of Islam and the spiritual heaven of which his teacher told him and which he found in the New Testament. Especially with the simple and more ignorant the gospel story of our Lord is attractive. The learned are apt to lose its beauty in the marvellous legends of Jesus found in the Traditions. The gospel story takes the hearer into the heart of Christianity, and it brings up in a non-controversial way the fundamental differences

between Christianity and Islam. As already pointed out, the death and resurrection of Christ have no place in Mohammedanism, and with this is connected the vital difference in the conception of salvation. So also anything that will lead Moslems to read the Scriptures is of great value. They at least will have many misconceptions corrected and may be led to deeper inquiry. The greatest attractive force is Christ Himself. No Moslem can speak of Him with anything but reverence, and we can let Him speak in His words in the gospels. The most uncompromising claims of Christianity are in those words. Just so far as we can base His claims on His own words, we make them strong. We must present Him, as He offered Himself, as the light and truth of the world and as the saviour and king of men.

V

A topic of importance is the relation of the teachings of Islam to those of Christianity. The history of the rise and development of Islam would lead one to expect a close relation, and experience shows that the relation is complicated. A Mohammedan receives Christian truth into a mind filled with a large amount of belief. These previous beliefs can by no possibility be all expelled, even if it were desirable. Any attempt to dispossess a man of all his religious convictions in order

that he may receive a totally new set is absurd. Furthermore, Christian faith is not a set of beliefs, but the acceptance of a personal saviour; and faith itself must be trusted to take possession of the heart and mind and to expel the alien affections and opinions. With a man born into a Christian environment a more or less definite set of Christian beliefs forms a part of that environment. He may himself conclude later that the beliefs are only partly Christian, or are only partially true to the facts of science or experience, and in all probability, consciously or unconsciously, the beliefs will change. Every intelligent Christian must be more or less aware of such a process in his experience. We must expect a similar process in the case of the Mohammedan who is drawn to Christ, and must not despise the day of small things. On the other hand, in order that a man should look to Christ as a saviour there must be certain convictions, e.g., that he is himself in need of salvation, that there is a divine power that seeks to save, and that sin is not the inevitable condition of mankind. As he inquires after Christ, he finds that Christ Himself makes certain assertions regarding God and man, and makes certain claims regarding Himself. It is not necessary or possible that the sinner seeking a saviour should accept definitely or understand fully all that is involved in those assertions and claims; but it is inconceivable, for example, that a man should accept Christ as

saviour and not say after Him, 'Our Father who art in heaven.'

The beliefs that seem thus to be inextricably related to the acceptance of salvation in Christ are not the same as those which revelation and Christian history have found it necessary to elaborate regarding the facts of spiritual life, and which may be essential in the subsequent Christian life. Even these latter cannot be ignored altogether in presenting the Christian faith to a Mohammedan. For example, the doctrine of the Trinity has been accepted by the Church and has become a part of its living experience. To the Mohammedan, as to most Christians, this doctrine stands in the forefront of Christianity as a presupposition, and not as a product of Christian life. The Christian missionary, although he may not believe that it is one of the primary doctrines for an inquirer, cannot ignore it or say that it belongs to esoteric Christianity, for there is no such distinction, and cannot be. The missionary must meet the issue and state the belief of Christians in the way best calculated to give the true impression, realizing meantime that the way of faith is the knowledge of God as father, finding in Jesus Christ a divine saviour, and experiencing in his life the working of the Holy Spirit. He can at least testify that this doctrine, which has been made a stumbling block, is to him the expression of the deepest experience of the soul and of

the facts of redemption, and can strive to show how it makes the thought of God, the ineffable and absolute, nearer and richer in meaning, and intellectually more conceivable in His attributes and nature and in His relation to His creatures. Other doctrines that must be stated and defended are our belief as to Christ the Son, and our acceptance of the Holy Scriptures.

In brief, while the great end of missionary effort is not the substitution of one set of beliefs for another, but the presentation of Christ as saviour, this implies a certain amount of doctrine, and in its working in life is inevitably associated with a body of more or less definite teaching. One must trust the 'implanted word' to win the day for truth, once it comes into close quarters with error in the soul's warfare, and yet the openness and honesty of Christianity require that we state our beliefs and defend them.

It is obvious that the teachings received with Christianity, and those accompanying Mohammedanism, must in some measure lie side by side in the mind of any Moslem who receives in any degree Christian truth. How far will they come into conflict? How far is that conflict immediate and how far is it more remote and the result of the working out of belief? And how far will the beliefs previously accepted fit in with and strengthen those coming with Christian faith? It

is the conviction of the writer that there is no immediate casting off of one belief in God and the acceptance of another. Christians and Moslems are both believers in the Unity, the one God, creator and controller of all things. Probably no Mohammedan would seriously object to the reply in the Westminster Catechism to the question, 'What is God?' except perhaps to the word 'Spirit,' and then largely because of a confusion of terms. As the Christian revelation and experience fill the word 'God' with richer meaning, the Mohammedan will find how utterly inadequate his conception was and alien elements will disappear. Our part is to strive to lead men to find the Father, or to find that Allah is Father, and that this name is greater than all those recounted on the beads of the pious. The type of Christian doctrine needed is not the high Calvinism that would limit His Fatherhood, nor is it the inchoate belief in a power working for righteousness. We have no right to lose the sturdiness of the Mohammedan's faith, though we may deplore its bareness of ethical content and the remoteness of God from the heart. The Persian idea of God is not so rigid as the Arab's, perhaps because his home is not in the wastes of the desert, and one has the right to use faith in God's immanence, though it may have degenerated into pantheism; his yearning for an incarnation, though it has led

to subjugation to unworthy pretenders; and his revolt from absolute fatalism.

The second article in the creed of Islam is incompatible with Christian faith. It is not very material what view is taken of the character of Mohammed. The claims made by his western apologists are mainly relative to his age and not absolute, as those of Christ, and if admitted go only a little way to substantiate what the Mohammedan means in confessing that Mohammed is the Prophet of God. He means that Mohammed is the last of the prophets and the greatest of all. Even those sects that believe in a later manifestation maintain Mohammed in the highest rank, and maintain that he superseded his predecessors. And in popular Islam the glorification makes him superhuman. This claim carries with it the rejection of Christ except as a superseded prophet. It is not a question of a theory of the Atonement or of the person of Christ, but of any atonement, any redemption, any incarnation that is in any way unique. The conflict of claims is immediate and cannot be stayed. A belief that is involved in the prophethood of Mohammed is that of revelation through human mediums and of sacred books that preserve the revelation. The common basis here is undeniable, but its value may easily be over-estimated. The Koran and the New Testament are so dissimilar in structure and

purpose that it is useless to try to put the New Testament in the place in which the Mohammedan puts the Koran. It is not enough, however, to show that the Christian conception of revelation is different. It must be shown to be richer and higher, and such it is.

It may be found in the end that the greatest *praeparatio evangelica* in Mohammedan countries is in the religious life outside the lines of the Koran, and in the various semi-Mohammedan sects. The yearning after a mystical union with the Divine, the longing to see the divine image in some human life, the desire for a way of forgiveness opened by the self-sacrifice of divine love instead of the bare fiat of will, the vigils and prayers and aspirations of poets and philosophers, may be the most powerful Christward forces. It may be that many of these are echoes of Christian truth, for the witness to Christ has never been entirely wanting in the lands of Islam; and in any case they are from Him, and He alone can guide these efforts to their goal and satisfy these longings.

Islam has one great lesson to teach us, the power of faith in a living God, not an abstraction, but One who rules the affairs of men. Another lesson is similar to this—the power of the appeal to personal authority. Nothing is more marvellous in Islam than the impress of the personality of

the Prophet on men of alien races and successive ages. As already pointed out, this force of personality is a striking feature in the religious life of Islam. It is the principal means used in the propagation of new sects and doctrines. For example, Bahāīs make very little use of the printed page, or of preaching in the formal sense in which the personality of the preacher is obscured in the conventionality of the address. The chief reliance is on the personal efforts of the 'missionaries,' who make the greatest use of informal social gatherings. The lesson is emphasis on the personal claims of our Lord, and faith in the power of personal influence exercised persistently through the channels of social intercourse, benevolent work, school life, or business. The missionary message of Islam has been in a sense a gospel, the definite proclamation of the personal relation of God to the individual. This is implied in the requirement that each Moslem confess his faith, and in the ritual prayer. But Islam in its workings is legalistic, and in developed Islam the law is the great institution of religion. The Pauline theology of free grace, and the great apostle's glory in the Gospel, are the message for Mohammedan legalism now as for Judaistic legalism in the first century. Life among Mohammedans leads one to rejoice in the conception of Christianity as the Gospel, the message of personal

and social salvation. One rejoices in the freedom of Christianity from identification with any specific form of social or political organization, and in the inapproachable ideal of manhood revealed by Christ and being gradually learned and realized by His followers. One reads with new joy the great words of the apostles: 'The law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ,' and 'I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation.'

THIRD STUDY

By Pastor Gottfried Simon, Dozent at the Theologische Schule, Bethel bei Bielefeld; formerly of the Rhenish Missionary Society, Sumatra.

THIRD STUDY

By Pastor Gottfried Simon[1] (Sumatra)

The observations and information recorded in this article are based entirely upon my personal experiences during the eleven years which I spent as a missionary amongst the Bataks in Sumatra. For the last century there has been amongst this tribe a constantly increasing movement towards the acceptance of Islam, a movement which is one of the final results of the six hundred years of Moslem propaganda in the Dutch Archipelago. The character of Islam as professed by the Bataks corresponds, generally speaking, to the type of Mohammedanism which has developed in the Dutch East Indies. It furnishes an instance also of the manner in which Islam has found entrance amongst peoples of lower culture.

It has been my lot to come into contact with Mohammedans of very different kinds; occasionally with races who had adopted Islam centuries ago,

[1] This article was written in German; the translation into English has been revised by the author.

like the Malays and Javanese, but for the most part with tribes who had been converted only for a generation. I have also had opportunity to witness personally the course of Moslem propaganda amongst heathen tribes in various regions. The Christian congregations which I have served consisted either entirely of those who had formerly been Mohammedans, or of pagans who before their conversion to the Gospel had been hesitating between Islam and Christianity. The Rhenish Missionary Society, to which I belonged, has received into its congregations from 6000 to 8000 converts from amongst Mohammedans. We may estimate the number of Christian converts from Mohammedanism in the Dutch East Indies at about 30,000.[1]

I

It is the propaganda of Islam amongst pagan nations that shows most clearly how far Islam possesses vital religious energies, for we cannot fully explain the transition of pagans to Islam as the result of mere worldly motives, though social and political factors undoubtedly have not a little to do with the change. The pagan on his low

[1] For details regarding the statements of this article, compare my work, *Islam und Christentum im Kampf um die Eroberung der animistischen Heidenwelt.* 2 Auflage. Berlin, 1914. An English translation was published in 1912: *The Progress and Arrest of Islam in Sumatra.* London: Marshall Brothers.

level of culture hopes in every way to be lifted by joining Islam. He is further impelled towards it by his anxiety lest he should be politically extinguished through the irresistible preponderance of a foreign government. Islam appears to him to be a power on a level with the European colonial Government, and in it he hopes to gain a bulwark which may enable him to retain, if not his political, at least his religious independence. In earlier times the favour shown to Islam by the colonial Government had a tendency to induce pagans to adopt the religion of the crescent. At present the Dutch Government is not so much inclined as formerly to take the part of Islam, but notwithstanding this many government provisions still help to further the popular movement in its favour. The Malay language, generally written in Arabic script, is regarded as a second sacred language next to the Arabic; it is in general use as the official language of administration and justice, and is the *lingua franca* of the Dutch East Indies. The native officials, writers, and soldiers, and the teachers in the secular government schools are Mohammedans, and often do more for the Mohammedan propaganda than is now acceptable to their European superiors.

In the last resort, however, it is the religious substance of the Moslem doctrine which attracts the heathen, for the animist is of a thoroughly

religious disposition and it is his religious inheritance which under present circumstances he finds to be seriously imperilled. These peoples, who were hitherto without a history or civilization worthy of the name, have perforce entered into the main stream of the world's history and culture and become exposed to the critical conditions which such entrance involves; this transition has destroyed the foundations of the popular religion, which was too narrow and circumscribed to meet the requirements of modern conditions. Their reverence for ancestors, their fear of spirits and such respect as they had for the God in whom, though at a great distance, they believed, are all tottering. The old religious powers on whose incalculable favour the hopes of the pagan were founded have proved to be entirely inadequate. They have no power to delay the destruction of the freedom and the nationality of the people, who are therefore seeking a new religious foundation which will give them a better support under the conditions of the modern age.

Unless the Bataks had believed that Islam would help them in this respect they would not have become Mohammedans. At the outset the proclamation of the unity of God in its absoluteness makes a strong impression upon the pagan. The old polytheism, and still more the old polydaemonism, tended to draw the soul of the pagan

restlessly to and fro. He would often begin his prayer with a long repetition of the names of all the gods which he knew, but was none the less oppressed by anxiety lest he should have omitted some mighty divinity, and so he would pray to the gods whom he knew to pass on his desires to those whom he might have forgotten. Such perplexity and anxiety was done away with by prayer to one almighty Allah. The proof that the latter really possesses the power which the Moslem teacher ascribes to him is furnished by the economic preponderance of the Moslem trader, the social superiority of the Moslem government official, and the intellectual superiority of the Moslem schoolmaster. Most of all, the mind of the people is impressed by the belief that the Moslem magician entirely overshadows the heathen medicine man, because he has received his magical powers direct from Allah. The brutal insolence with which the proud pilgrim from Mecca spurns the superstitious beliefs of the pagan, which hitherto have been considered as above question, convinces the pagan that firm faith in Allah confers an overwhelming power upon men.

This one God is no human invention. The Moslem appeals to a book, the Koran, from which he quotes. True, the pagan does not understand its Arabic words, but he sees that the employment of these 'book words' confers upon him who quotes

them a remarkable assurance of manner. He easily comes to the conclusion that the possession of a divine revelation embodied in writing and thus unchangeable is an immense advantage, for hitherto he has known only oral tradition, which is subject to continual modifications, a few written magical formulas, and a mythology which is highly developed but constantly modified by the imaginative story-teller. He has no infallible document. Speaking generally, he attributes the wisdom of the fathers not to God but to the fathers themselves; they got it from somewhere, perhaps actually from within themselves, but at all events not from God. In Islam, on the contrary, the one God speaks through the one book to the one race of man. Thus the pagan who has hitherto been groping among the many perplexities of life has found a firm standing ground. In the hour of death, too, the Mohammedan has a comfort which the heathen does not possess. The latter has a belief in an existence beyond the grave, but it is one which fills him with terror, whether he is destined to hover eternally in the air without rest as an evil spirit or to find an entrance into the kingdom of the dead. The one God, on the other hand, promises in his one book to every Moslem an unspeakable fulness of bliss, a sevenfold heaven and a paradise glorious beyond measure. The more the animist feels his position threatened by the inrush of modern culture,

and the more clearly he becomes conscious of his social, political, intellectual, and moral impotence, with the more passionate eagerness does his soul embrace the idea of the promised paradise which will bring to him bliss, and to the white man damnation. Paradise attracts him by the very refinement of sensual gratification: eating and drinking, idleness and enjoyment beckon to the faithful. No lack of present earthly well-being fails to find its full compensation in the life to come. Nor does Islam neglect to provide for such souls as have a real desire for inward communion with God. There are wandering teachers who proclaim the virtue of the rosary and who give directions for mystical exercises. The aspirant who desires to follow their teachings is secluded for some weeks, day and night, in a mosque and allowed little food. He is promised that saints and prophets, and finally Allah himself, will appear in his soul, and when that takes place the devotee has reached the highest state of holiness. He has become confessedly the favourite of God and a certain heir of paradise.

II

What influence has this Mohammedan piety on the character of the believer? The mystical exercises to which I have just referred give an unequivocal answer. The man who participates in them becomes proud and self-satisfied. His need

is supplied. He requires no further teaching. He is guarded against injury when in the grave by the angel of the dead, he is no longer liable to judgment by the angel Gabriel; for has he not seen God? People will bring him presents as to a prince, and make a deeper obeisance before him than before the chief of a tribe. The more pious the Moslem is the more pronounced is his estimate of himself, and the greater his self-glorification. In his case the desire for teaching which the pagan manifested has disappeared. The man who has been initiated into the mystic secrets has obtained the hidden (*bāṭin*) knowledge of God. With his superiors he is blasé, cringingly polite; towards unbelievers gruff and fanatical: the heathen is a filthy dog, the Christian the fuel of hell. The ordinary believer imitates this revered saint as closely as possible.

The result of this is that the common people become more and more dependent; they entrust themselves absolutely to these holy men, believing that they will show them the way to God. Nor can the common man help himself in this matter. Were he to rely upon himself he could not possibly find his way in the labyrinth of the new religious ordinances. It would mean his learning a foreign language, Arabic, his reading a number of books, especially the Koran, studying Mohammedan law with its regulations for the smallest details of life and knowing a multitude of ceremonies and religious

ordinances. Any one who is being instructed by a Moslem teacher, for example, regarding the daily prayers, will soon find out how difficult it is to attain such knowledge. For instance, it is important for him to know, when he places his fingers upon his knees in prayer, how far they must extend over the limb beyond the knee. In such things there is only one man who can really guide him, the village priest, and when his knowledge is exhausted it is necessary to inquire of the next higher religious authority in the district. The Moslem has been delivered over, bound hand and foot, to his priesthood in matters that concern his welfare equally in this world and the next. The new Moslem religion thus makes its adherents the very slaves of men, and that to a higher degree than their old paganism, although the pagan is completely dependent upon his sorcerers.

This relation we find takes the life out of personal piety and paralyses the natural religious forces of the people. The prayer formulas once learned mechanically in an unknown tongue promote mental sloth. The moral judgment is deprived of scope for action, on the one hand by a casuistic law, and on the other by a fatalism which denies all freedom of the will. The practical religious life is petrified into dead performances, which is what almsgiving, pilgrimage, fasting, reciting the Koran, the prescribed ritual ablutions, prostrations (throwing one-

self on the ground) at prayer, so called, five times a day and the repetition of incomprehensible Arabic formulas really are. Thus the inward spiritual and religious nature becomes atrophied. The fact that the ordinary convert quietly endures such a condition of servility is explained by the fatalism which he brought over with him from paganism. Things are as they are; it is God s will that some should be wise and have good fortune in this world, and that others should be robbed and cheated by them. He has fixed the life destiny of each man once for all and nothing can alter it; one must accept it like everything else. The belief is not in a fate separate from God, but in a God who is Himself an arbitrary and incomprehensible fate against which it is futile to rebel.

III

I have noticed discontent with the teaching of Islam only amongst those Moslems who had already come into contact with Christianity. I have, however, known of Malay pilgrims who, on returning from Mecca to the coast districts, have cast away their turbans and given strong utterance to their indignation at the impositions which had been practised on them in Mecca. Again, the harshness of Mohammedan priests in their disregard of traditional customs has sometimes elicited passing displeasure. For instance, when the village priest

at my mission station, after having been married for several years, divorced his wife without returning to her a share of the marriage portion, the people were indignant. And when the priest raised the scale of offerings and threatened that if the people did not meet his demands he would not bury them, they complained, though without result. In places where the higher priesthood is in full agreement with the indigenous chiefs, the hand of the rulers lies heavy upon the helpless people and their minds are full of discontent, but they are far too slack to attempt any resistance. In some cases the covetousness of their teachers is contrasted by Moslems with the unselfish love of faithful missionaries and their native assistants. Sometimes, too, though seldom, we meet men who are uneasy as to whether their good works will really obtain entrance for them into paradise; but the Mohammedan priest himself declares that in this life it is impossible to attain complete assurance that God will receive a man into heaven. If He is pleased to do so He will, but if not there is no help for it. The Moslem is so accustomed to this uncertainty that it hardly occurs to him to consider whether there might not be another alternative.

IV

From what I have said we see that a belief in the existence of one God and a hope of delights in

the world to come awaken religious impulses in the Mohammedan Malay. We cannot say that they furnish him with vital energies; for the Moslem belief in God does not necessarily involve the desire for communion with Him or for willing obedience to Him, but rather a helpless submission to the almighty will which dominates everything, and against which man is powerless. The hope of Islam in a world to come occupies the fancy and influences the desires, but not the moral will. The moral character and conduct of the man is a matter of indifference, the important thing is that he should be able to show as great an amount as possible of meritorious work in the performance of duties and ceremonies. The commonest daily religious performance is that of the fivefold prayer, but this does not satisfy the longing of the soul for God, because it is regarded simply as work delivered in payment of His due. The Moslem desires to offer to God the reverence due to Him, but to establish a personal relationship between himself and God is far from his thoughts.

Were we to examine the remaining phenomena of religious life in Islam on the same lines, we should find everywhere that personal religious life is set aside in favour of ceremonies, that duty is performed mechanically, simply because it must be done, that fasts are observed simply because every one fasts. No one dares to break a fast, for who would expose

himself alone to the curse of the teachers and perhaps even of God Himself? There may indeed be some who earnestly desire to stand right with God, and some there are who undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca from this motive. Others are driven to do so by an evil conscience; after a dissolute life they desire to adjust their final balance of account with God; but the subsidiary motives which operate in the case of the ten thousand annual pilgrims from the Dutch Archipelago are to a very small extent of a religious nature. The pilgrim desires to have an opportunity of seeing the world and later on to attain a respected position in his own country as a religious teacher, and this he can only acquire by going to Mecca. Indeed reports of the dissolute life which he may lead in Mecca in the companionship of beautiful women allure many a hot-blooded young man of the higher classes to undertake the pilgrimage. The pilgrimage then really ceases to be a penitential journey and becomes rather the holiday excursion of a pampered man of the world. The general reverence in which the Koran is held does not result from its fruitful influence upon the spiritual life of the Moslem community. The contents of the book matter but little, seeing that they are so slightly known. Its religious value is held to consist in the fact that the believer possesses a holy volume, which he takes in his hand when he has to swear an oath, to which he pays an idolatrous

veneration and from which he may be able to chant a few passages in order to gain religious merit.

The most important religious possession in the eyes of the brown race is the divine gift of 'wisdom' (*ilmu*), as they call the Arabian magic. God is regarded as the disposer of innumerable magic formulas, a portion of which He bestows upon His elect prophets and saints, and such bestowal is a most especial proof of His favour, seeing that thereby God in effect delivers Himself into the hands of the believer. The man who is able to use the right magic formula at the right time and in the right place has power over God. As against the Moslem magic, the Almighty Himself is powerless, He cannot even prevent a sinner who is ripe for hell being magically transported into paradise by a clever magician, and hence they say that God can only be resisted through God. Accordingly, what the pagan has lost in the way of magic by throwing over his old religion is amply restored to him by Islam. The talismans and amulets engraved with divine names, Koranic verses, and fragments of the ritual prayers have immeasurably enriched his old pagan inventory of magical properties.

V

The promises which the Moslem teacher makes to the pagan before his conversion are too high-flown not to produce disappointment in the mind of the

new disciple later on, but when the convert perceives that his new religion does not give him what he expected from it he does not blame his religion, but his own inadequate religious knowledge and his sloth. If only, he says to himself, I could read Arabic like the village priest, had I only visited Mecca, had I regularly during the past year paid all my dues and always said the daily prayers, had I been able to avoid all mistakes in my ceremonial purifications, how different things would be with my religious life.

If, notwithstanding this humility, discontent makes its appearance among believers, their priest knows how to make adroit use of such feelings in order to urge his congregation to greater performances. He will threaten them with the impending judgment of God, which will chastise them for their negligence in the performance of their Moslem duties. He announces the end of the world; only some special performance can avert the wrath of God which the saint initiated in the counsels of God distinctly perceives to be imminent. Our Bataks are quick-witted enough to feel in their intercourse with the more educated Christians their ignorance in matters relating to their own religion, but they comfort themselves with the thought that after all there are plenty of teachers who can tell them about it. If they only had the same hidden knowledge they too would be able to reply to the criticisms of Christians.

From what has been said it will be easily understood that the Moslem is seldom driven to acceptance of the Gospel by discontent with his present religion. Nevertheless, continuous contact of Mohammedans with the Gospel does awaken in some of them a suspicion that it offers them something which Islam does not possess. What this is one cannot of course express in a formula.

I have often noticed that Mohammedans took delight in the biblical stories, both of the Old and New Testaments. The mere fact that these stories were read to them in their mother tongue appealed to them. It was different from anything that they had known before. True, fantastic Moslem stories are told amongst the people now and again, and they like to listen to them, but they treat them as belonging to the same class as the heathen fairy tales and fables which have no claim to truthfulness. The Mohammedan is impressed by the fact that God prepared His people Israel for many centuries by prophets who foretold the mission of Jesus, and by His genealogy contained in Scripture. The notable Mohammedan families amongst the Bataks plume themselves not a little upon their ancestry.

The Bataks are sympathetically impressed by the miracles of our Lord. No doubt they regard miracles as the usual sign of a religious leader, but the miraculous works of Jesus are of a different type from the wonders and magical tricks which are

related about the dead or living saints of Islam. Jesus, they see, did miracles only when He was able thereby to help others. When did He ever, as do all the sorcerers of black magic, use His miraculous gifts for His own enrichment?

The manner in which our Lord sets forth His teachings in epigrams and parables is pleasing to the Batak, whose popular morality is fond of proverbs and imagery. Jesus was poor, unlike the magicians who without exception use their wonder-working powers for their own benefit, while He went from place to place healing and helping others. This feature in our Lord's character attracts them, for they feel their own extreme poverty, especially in contrast to the well-to-do Europeans. Their compassion is aroused at the treatment of our Saviour by His own people. Surely, they feel, He did not deserve this. The story of the crucifixion touches them. They well understand, from the experiences of their own life, how the covetous priests by their intrigues brought death upon Him, for every one of them has suffered, in the case of himself or others, injustice of some kind. The Batak takes little interest at first in the vicarious and redemptive aspect of the death of Christ, but he is much impressed with our Lord's power over evil spirits and over death, and with His prophecy of His return as a mighty judge. They think that such a leader and mediator is not unacceptable, but

that Mohammedans have surely a much better mediator in the person of their Prophet.

The Bataks appreciate the loving invitations of Christ, as represented in the parables of the Good Shepherd and the Prodigal Son. They think it decidedly convenient to get rid of sin and its consequences so easily. They may shake their heads at the story of the resurrection as being improbable, but it seems to them by no means impossible. As long as they do not realize that a belief in Jesus must oust faith in Mohammed they have no objection to allowing that Jesus is the Son of God, seeing that all men are children of God, as even pagans know, for has not God created them and placed them in the world? They are ready to allow that the Jesus of the Gospel is the same as the 'Īsā of whom the Mohammedan teachers also know something. We shall see afterwards at what point their rejection comes in.

Generally speaking, one may say that the missionary's greatest difficulty is to get the ear of Moslems at all when he speaks of the Gospel. Only those are prepared to listen on whom the conduct of Christians has already made an impression. They know that the missionaries are always anxious to promote the bodily welfare of all men, whether Malays, Chinese, or Bataks. This is sufficiently proved by the daily medical ministrations in the forty main stations and 440 out-stations, and by the orphanage and the

two leper asylums, in one of which more than 300 lepers are cared for. The Mohammedans know perfectly well that this labour of love on the part of missionaries and doctors as also of native helpers is carried on entirely without self interest, even although crafty Mecca pilgrims would persuade the people that the missionaries will demand large sums of money on the recovery of their patients, or that they receive a special reward in coin for every patient. Decades of long sustained labour have convinced the people of the untenability of such calumnies. Some priests will tell the people that the white man is merely a slave of Allah and has been commissioned by Him to deliver Mohammedans from sickness and suffering. God, in fact, has punished the white men by putting upon them the task of healing the sick, whereas the Moslem priesthood would never think of defiling themselves by such servile ministrations. But this again does not readily find acceptance. On the contrary it is a common thing in wide circles for the people to reply to the charges of the priests that the Christians after all have a real religion.

The life and character of many Christians, including some of our native helpers and leaders, is not all that it might be, but the Mohammedan nevertheless has to confess that their behaviour is a marked advance upon the arrogant and overbearing conduct of the Islamic priesthood. Mohammedans

recognize that the serious efforts of our village elders to settle quarrels, especially between young married people, are praiseworthy. Polygamy has never become an institution amongst the pagan Bataks; it is regarded as a cause of strife and the privilege of the rich. The monogamous marriage of Christians, the high esteem in which women are held, the peacefulness of happy marriages which they see in the dwellings of the missionaries and their helpers, are all in agreement with Batak ideas. Divorce is rendered difficult by their tribal laws, and although the chiefs are ready to take advantage of it the popular conscience disapproves of it and the strict rule of monogamous marriage in the Christian Church is not a little impressive to the Moslem. He is also attracted by the Christian marriage rite, clearly setting forth as it does by word and ceremony the indissolubility of the marriage bond, in the plighting of troth between bride and bridegroom, the joining of their hands, the marriage exhortation and the divine benediction. It often enough happens that the spectacle of a Christian marriage gives the first impulse to the conversion of a Moslem. We may say that Christian worship in general, with hymn-singing by young people, prayers in the vernacular, preaching that can be understood by all, the fatherly attitude of the clergy in their exhortation and pastoral ministrations which breathe the spirit of loving service,

all go to impress Moslems favourably. When one of them has been to a Christian service, if only a funeral, he will not easily venture to say that the Christians have no religion. Many among our Christians, though, alas! not all, preserve their faith through sickness and in the face of death. They have renounced all magic and witchcraft and committed their bodies and souls with quiet trust into the hands of God. Simply and without false shame they confess the assurance of forgiveness of their sins through the cross of Christ. Thus they bear eloquent witness to the power of the Saviour among the Mohammedan relatives whom popular custom brings to the bed of sickness and death.

Value is attached to the educative influence of Christian missions. Obedience to parents is regarded even amongst pagans as a virtue, but one which they fail to call forth in their children, and Islam has done nothing to amend this. Hence the Christian school which seriously inculcates the fifth commandment attracts Mohammedans. It is true that the percentage of children attending Christian schools who actually go over to Christianity is very small, but the people, hungry as they are for education, regard it as no small benefit that all children without any religious distinction are received as pupils. Finally, Mohammedans themselves, when occasion serves, will confess that the Christian school equips the child better for life and has a

more favourable moral influence upon him than Moslem instruction in the Koran, through which the children learn with difficulty a few fragments of Arabic and possibly the Arabic alphabet. They allow also that the young people are far better cared for by the Christian workers than by Moslem teachers, the majority of whom give teaching in magic along with their school work. Dabbling in magic leads the youths to immorality, and makes them impudent to young girls and discourteous to elders; for in reliance upon the magic powers which they believe themselves to have attained they fear nothing—are they not charmed against thrusts and cuts, and even against the bullets of European soldiers, and are they not, by reason of their magic, superior to the village elders in wisdom and eloquence? It is an open secret that it is precisely the most famous of the Mohammedan teachers who exert the most deleterious influence on youth.

The Christian Church stands for unity in the Batak country. In all churches of the mission the same Gospel is read; there are no differences in doctrine. The Church has a stable organization. The effective organization of the Christian Church is chiefly manifested in its discipline; offences against Christian morality are followed by the same penalties whether in north or south. It is the Church, and not the missionary, which pronounces judgment, and it does not hesitate, if

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need be, to excommunicate members of high social position. Clear-sighted and resolute action of this kind makes a powerful impression on a people lacking in strength of will.

VI

It may seem strange that the same points in the Christian life and doctrine which attract the Mohammedan also call forth his opposition. For instance the discipline of the Christian Church inspires him with respect, but when he considers the matter quietly the fear arises that this same discipline may prove unpleasant to him and limit his personal freedom. To be bound to one wife throughout life and under all circumstances, and to have no possibility of taking another in addition, is to many a disagreeable limitation. In other words, the lofty demands of Christian morality alarm Moslems. They are ready to admire them, but only so long as admiration has not to be exchanged for allegiance. The silencing power of the Word of God gives it a grip upon a man's conscience; that is not always pleasant. The possibility of inward communion with God which is afforded by Christian prayer places a man in the presence of God and lays upon him the obligation of seeking communion with God, and this is a hindrance to sinful pleasure. The ritual prayers of Islam are indeed difficult to learn, on account of their complicated ceremonial,

but they have the advantage over Christian prayers in not disquieting the conscience.

In fine the chief offence arises from the fact that the conscience is touched by Christian teaching. This is true also of the doctrine of the person of Christ. At first the outsider regards the doctrine of the Trinity as a ridiculous and foolish proposition, and the Mohammedan teachers do their best to represent it to their disciples as absolutely senseless. But this is not where the real difficulty lies. The Batak is extremely fond of a hair-splitting discussion of a difficult question. He would simply delight in a subtle disputation about the Trinity and about the divine Sonship of our Lord, and such conversations do sometimes have an enlightening effect. Thoughtful hearers may see that the doctrine of the Trinity is by no means the unthinkable proposition that they imagine. But that does not mean that the real stumbling-block has been removed. The same may be said of the divine Sonship of our Lord. The Mohammedan is fond of attacking it with cheap ridicule. How can God have a son? Do you suppose that He has a wife? But the mocker is often disarmed by a simple question. Do you believe that God can do whatever He pleases? Can He then not have a son without taking a wife? To overcome an objection of this kind is not difficult, but as soon as the Mohammedan realizes that this Jesus has

a unique relation to God, that He can share His place with no other, whether spirits, whom He has the power to drive out, or prophets, who do not know God as He does, the more pronounced does his opposition become. He recognizes that the worship of Christ excludes the worship of Mohammed. Either Mohammed is the mediator, or Christ: he cannot hold to both. But who would dare to give up Mohammed?

The acceptance of Christ means a breach with every form of animism; the wearing of amulets is a sin for him who believes in the power of Jesus. All the secret magical implements and powers of the priests are forbidden to the disciple of Christ. There are no such things as magical methods of becoming rich. Beautiful as the story of the Prodigal Son may be, it has the bitter moral that any one returning to the Father's house must conform to the way of that house.

We have seen that the cross of Jesus calls forth the sympathy of hearers. Occasionally the common Mohammedan objection is made to it that crucifixion was a fate unworthy of a holy prophet, but generally speaking the Cross is rejected because the Mohammedan cannot understand that anything of the kind should be a necessary condition of the forgiveness of sins.

The preaching of the missionary ought neither to smooth away the angles and the edges of the Gospel,

nor to emphasize unnecessarily at the beginning the elements which most repel the hearer. We have to ask, then, whether there are points of Christian doctrine which may be kept back in order to avoid unnecessary offence. In answer to this we must remember that it is impossible in setting forth Christianity to confine ourselves to a certain limited area of its doctrine. We might perhaps do so in public teaching, in which the preacher can choose his own ground, but as soon as we come to anything like a discussion, the opponent simply forces us to deal with doctrines the exposition of which we would prefer to postpone. In the Moslem we have an opponent who possesses a knowledge, however incorrect, of Christianity. Our task therefore is not to carry to the Moslem as we would to the heathen an entirely unknown doctrine as something completely new, but rather to remove mountains of prejudice and to correct a multitude of misconceptions as to our Christian doctrine. The Mohammedan priests in the Dutch East Indies who have been trained in Mecca have been regularly taught to dispute with Christians, and even the least educated village priest has some idea of how to do this. The more thoroughly, however, we answer our opponent, the less shall we be able to avoid those doctrines which cause special offence, for every part of the Christian teaching, if thoroughly explained, stands in definite contrast to that of Islam, and our inter-

locutors will soon compel us to make the antithesis quite clear. For instance, we are asked on what we base our certainty of entering into paradise, or of the forgiveness of sins. In answer we point to Jesus and His cross, and say that we believe in redemption through His blood, and justification through His grace. We thereby exclude all merit on the part of man, and the Moslem forthwith realizes that we thus stigmatize all his works of merit, his religious observances, his fasting, his pilgrimage, and so forth, as entirely without value as the basis of salvation. But the man who has all his life set his hope upon such meritorious works of course feels himself injured when he sees how lightly we esteem what appears to him most precious. Again, we are often driven to explain the depth of the biblical idea of sin, and to show that even the secret desire of the heart to take the property or the wife of one's neighbour, or even a lack of love to one's neighbour, is sinful. In contrast with this the Moslem naturally feels how superficial is his conception of sin. To him sin is the neglect of a clause in the Islamic civil law of marriage, or the defective performance of some small ritual action. Again, we are asked about the teaching of the Bible, and, first and foremost, the inquirer wants to know what it says about Mohammed and the Koran. He very soon has to be told that the Bible contains the final and binding revelation of God to mankind,

and accordingly he realizes that to the Christian Mohammed's claim is void and his book a mere human production. I need hardly say that it is unnecessary to expose in a controversial way the moral weaknesses of Mohammed's life, or the contradictions of the Koran, but if I endeavour, without making comparisons, to set forth in itself the glory of Christ and the fulness of biblical teaching, the sensitive Moslem soon finds out that his Prophet and his holy book will not endure comparison with this Prophet and this Book of books, and this too will cause offence. It is not necessary that I should explicitly condemn the sensual descriptions of the joys of paradise. I have only to explain the spiritual nature of the Christian hope after death, and the fulness of joy in perfect communion with Christ and the vision of God, to make the Moslem feel that for me at least the joys of his paradise are worthless, and it irritates him that his glowing expectations have no attraction for me.

VII

We have seen that it is difficult to present Christian teaching to the Mohammedan without offending him, but by that I do not mean to say that there are no points of contact in Islam itself for the proclamation of the Gospel. For instance, if we take the omnipotence of God we shall find that every ascription of praise to the divine good-

ness which sustains us and the entire creation meets with lively agreement on the part of the Moslem, and in speaking of it we may even adopt his phraseology to a certain extent. Indeed this fact is of the greatest importance for the evangelizing of Moslems, for it is on this common ground that the missionary finds it possible to get a hearing at all, since, generally speaking, the Moslem regards the Christian as a man without religion. The attitude of the many unbelieving Europeans among the colonists, who are absorbed in their work, often with the desire to make their fortune quickly, has hitherto strengthened the notion in his mind that the white man has no appreciation of things religious. But when I am able to speak of God in the phraseology of the Moslem he perceives that I at any rate have a desire for the honour of God, a hope of paradise, a faith in prophets and in sacred scriptures, and an acceptance of the duty of submission to God, that I honour Him with worship, and repudiate such sins as theft, falsehood, murder, and adultery no less decidedly than the Moslem does. We can also go a step further than this, by pointing out that the Koran and the Bible agree in certain doctrines. When a mocking opponent utters obscene blasphemies against the virgin birth of Christ one can point out to him that the Koran also teaches the birth of Jesus Christ without a father, and he has to confess with

confusion that his religion forbids him to speak offensively about the history of the birth of Christ. We may often connect what we have to say with the mention common to both books of Adam as the first of the human race, of Abraham, Joseph, Solomon and other Old Testament characters. The knowledge of the Koran, however, amongst the Mohammedan priests who are generally ignorant of Arabic is too imperfect for us to effect much with arguments taken from that book. It is important to make diligent use of such points of contact because by that means alone can we gain the Moslem's confidence. It is, however, quite another question whether we are justified in employing a doctrine contained in the Koran as the basis for an extended discussion. Passages about Satan and the angels are the simplest to handle. They are prominent neither among the Moslems of Sumatra nor in Christianity. But even on these minor points the difference between us is patent, for whenever we seek to build upon our common foundation we must first destroy a great part of it. We must protest against the worship of angels which is especially carried on by Moslem sorcerers, whereas this is the very thing which is important for the Moslem. We cannot assign the rôle to the angel Gabriel assigned to him by Moslem theology at the end of the world, which is, to hold the scales: he decides whether the weight of good

works is adequate, he is actually lord at the judgment.

If we begin to develop the teaching to be drawn from mercy as a divine attribute we are at once met with a difficulty. We have to protest against the idea that God's goodness is a matter of mood, and that it is a matter of complete indifference to Him whether He sends a man to heaven or hell. We must teach that we are not slaves of God, with no power of self-determination, but rather His beloved children. However useful, therefore, we find the acknowledgment and praise of God's mercy as a means of gaining a hearing, it fails us as a common ground when we begin to employ it as a starting-point for the doctrines of God's attributes in detail. In order to guard against gross misunderstanding we are compelled to attack the Moslem conception of the divine mercy. Further, the fact that we reverence the 'Īsā of Islam whom we call Jesus, is, to begin with, a useful point of contact, but when we come to teach about His life and work we can only do so in the light of the Cross. The apocryphal legend about the Jew on whom 'Īsā is said to have conferred His own image so that he might be crucified in His stead, to say nothing of other mythical stories, is such a total misapprehension of the picture of Jesus that we really have first to obliterate the features of 'Īsā from the heart

of the Moslem before we can print upon it the true lineaments of our Jesus. The hope of the Mahdī, or as they say in the Dutch East Indies, the expectation that 'the righteous and white prince' will appear before the end of all things, can scarcely serve to awaken an understanding of the second advent of Jesus. For at His return 'Īsā is to surrender His kingdom in a final conflict to Mohammed and then Himself turn Mohammedan. The Moslem's mystical exercises certainly testify to his search after communion with God. They do not, however, serve to awaken his understanding for the Christ within us. For such mystical exercises conjure God into man, to absorb man in the deity. The more passive a man is in the mystical art the better. Whereas the Christ within us awakens for the first time in men the living power to work in His name.

The difficulty is perhaps greatest in the matter of eschatology. In dealing with this doctrine we obviously have to depopulate the sensually furnished paradise of the Moslem in order to make room for the Christian hope of eternal life in its spiritual outlines. We must be ready to take away from the Moslem his houris, the dishes wide as the circle of the earth and full of fragrant viands, the perfumes and luxurious couches, the sparkling brooks, and trees whose fruits fall into his mouth: in fact little is left to represent the common belief but the name 'paradise': the contents are totally

different. We behold the Lamb slain, the tree of life, the redeemed in white robes, and look forward to the marriage supper to which we shall sit down with the Lord. But these are of course sensible figures for supersensible experience. What is essential in such imagery is not the sensible figure but the supersensible Christ and our supersensible communion with Him. An ideal hitherto sensible is therefore not merged in some new sensible goal, but rather the Christian representation foregoes any attempt to depict the details of the Last Day. It definitely refuses to allow eschatological experience to be sensibly apprehended and thereby to become alluring; rather the earthly expression is made the vehicle of the expectation of intangible, supramundane reality. The fact that Christian eschatology lays no weight on complete representation of the life to come saves it from the temptation to indulge in grotesque and fantastic descriptions, and shows that the earthly imagery is but a picture of the supernatural reality. It has no intention of satisfying impertinent curiosity or of alluring by means of sensual desire. The allurement is only for the spiritual side of man and the satisfaction is for the Christian's home-sickness. We can see what a wide difference there is between the eschatological tendency of the two religions, and the further we enter into the essential meaning of either the more does this divergence increase.

The same thing might be proved with regard to other religious conceptions such as sin, judgment, hell, and so forth. We should everywhere encounter the same difficulties. The Moslem associates with the words in question entirely different ideas from those of the Christian. It is therefore impossible simply to employ the religious vocabulary of Islam as the foundation of our missionary presentation of the Gospel. In the case of these conceptions also, what on first comparison seems to be a common foundation disappears when we scrutinize it more closely. If, therefore, we do not wish that the old errors in the mind of the Moslem should be merely adorned with Christian names and so give rise to an entirely unbiblical syncretism, we must not hesitate to overthrow without remorse these supposed common foundations, and to cast aside their fragments. Only then can a new building be erected on the new foundation. We may, in fact, accept it as a general law that congruity between Christianity and Islam is apparent only at first sight. The further investigation proceeds, the deeper does the gulf between the two become. No doubt those who have confined themselves in their discussions with Mohammedans to mere skirmishing will have much to say of the breadth of the common foundation. Those who have led up the main army of the vital forces of the Gospel against the Islamic enemy become painfully con-

scious how the supposed common ground gives way under their feet. It is as true of converts from Islam in this connexion as it was of the Pharisees: they must die with Christ; and because it is always a bitter thing to die, conversions from Islam are both difficult and rare.

VIII

The present controversy of Christianity with the Moslem faith undoubtedly translates many things in the New Testament from the dim light of the past into the bright noonday of the present. Many points of contact exist between the Phariseeism of the Palestinian Jew at the time of Christ and Islam of the present age. In both cases we see the same anxious observance of the ceremonial laws of food; Mohammedan teachers in Sumatra publish popular tracts on the question as to which tropical animals are clean and which are unclean. In both cases we observe the opinion that that which enters into the mouth defiles the man, while evil thoughts, especially hatred towards a non-Moslem, the sin of witchcraft and hypocritical flattery of powerful unbelievers are allowed to have free course. In both cases we notice the ostentatious praying at the corners of the street so as to be seen of men, in both contempt towards those who are without, because they do not belong to the elect people of God, in both the sensuous expectations as to resurrection,

which last, as we know, differentiated the Palestinian Pharisee from the Hellenistic Jew. A man on undertaking a pilgrimage to Mecca often leaves his nearest relatives to suffer for lack of his help in order that he may become a pilgrim, just as did the Jew who, according to our Lord's saying, let his parents suffer for the sake of Corban. The Moslem trader imagines himself to be religious when, like the Jew of the time of our Lord, he swears by all kinds of objects. As the Jew demanded signs and wonders from our Lord as a proof of His mission so precisely does the Moslem of the present day reproach the missionary because he, unlike the Moslem teacher, evinces no command of divine powers of magic. The struggle of the apostle Paul to maintain the free grace of God and his energetic repudiation of all justification by works again become intelligible to us in the conflict with Islam. The reproach of the Cross, too, is keenly felt by the Moslem, to whom it is inconceivable that the chosen Prophet should have suffered a shameful execution. The evangelical freedom of St. Paul has by some been misconstrued as a lack of piety; the Moslem levels the same reproach at us, and when he sees that the Christian convert no longer observes the ritual prayers and purifications he regards him as an unbeliever.

Some theologians of our time have expressed surprise at the record of the apostolic decree

given in Acts xv, because it seems to have been so soon superseded, but our experience in missions to Moslems renders this quite intelligible. One of our most difficult problems is the linking together of converts from Islam and paganism into one inwardly and outwardly united communion, and in order to compass this we have to use provisional compromises regarding Christian customs as to food and the like which afterwards may be superseded. If the two parties are to live together in the unity of the Church, each must be prepared to sacrifice something of its legitimate freedom. Moreover, such provisional ordinances require a special degree of wisdom which is given to us only by the Holy Spirit, and we cannot be surprised that the members of the apostolic council in a similar situation should appeal in their circular very specially to His guidance.

Such characters as Simon the magician, who claim to be possessed of a special divine power and for this reason are idolized by the people, appear constantly amongst Indonesian Moslems of to-day. The idea of Simon and the other magicians that the Holy Spirit could be bought for money corresponds entirely with the practice of Moslem magicians, who believe themselves to be furnished with mystical power. We have here mysticism degenerating into magic. In strong contrast with such, the Christian mysticism of St. Paul shines out brightly. Such mysticism

speaks indeed of the Christ within us. Its exponent says in so many words, 'I live, yet not I.' But this mysticism knows no mechanical exercises, no passive contemplation which can produce spiritual exaltation to order. The boundary between the person of Christ and the human personality indwelt by Him is in no way obliterated, but the mystical communion between them remains a true communion, that is it consists of a vital connexion between two personalities each of which maintains its separate existence and activity. Both God and man remain each what they are: there can be no such thing as the absorption of the human into the divine.

The teaching of Scripture regarding miracles is also illuminated by comparison with Islam. Miracles are among the proofs of a divine mission and the disciples of the Moslem magicians lay claim to miraculous gifts as did the sons of the Pharisees. When therefore St. Paul regards conviction of the conscience by the Gospel as the essential proof of the truth of Christianity this view stands in sharp contrast with the notion of the Moslem world. Mohammedanism still regards the miracle as primarily a proof of divine favour, and by its doctrine of magical wonders actually degrades the conception of divine freedom. The Deity becomes subservient to a human being who is thoroughly practised in magic, however he

may follow his own selfish ends, whereas our Saviour by His miracles relieves the needs of men. By them He does not coerce God, but, on the contrary, the miracles are counted as answers to His prayers. Moreover, in Islam the miraculous effect is bound up with the power of the magic formula. The really effective element is the magic word and the magic ceremony, whereas in the New Testament the miracle ever stands as a free activity of the living God. To the disciple of Jesus, no less than to Himself, does the principle apply that the proof of true discipleship is not the miracle but the doing of the Father's will. He is not to rejoice in the possession of miraculous gifts but in the certainty that his name is written in heaven.

The convert from Islam who has escaped from religious servitude gives us an insight into the true nature of Christian freedom. He greets with joy evangelical freedom from the law. No longer is he cramped and intimidated by a casuistic law-book with an endless series of individual commands. The broad principles of his free Christian life are now based on the love of Christ, responsibility to the supreme Judge, fear of the living God, and the guidance of His Spirit. The disciple of Christ who is led by the Spirit has been released from the guidance of Islamic divines; he is himself taught of God.

The contrast between the Christian and the Moslem hope of a life to come casts light, as we saw above, upon New Testament eschatology. The Christian message of a future life may appear simple and even bald to the Moslem whose soul has been filled with the fantastic and sensuous notions of paradise presented by his faith. In the same way the Jew, whose mind was filled with eschatological hopes such as those depicted in the Jewish apocalypses of the time of Jesus, must have felt the apparent poverty and reserve of the teaching which Jesus and His apostles gave of the life to come. There are few indications in the New Testament regarding the intermediate condition of the soul of which Moslem divines have so much to tell. But it is this same modest reserve which forms the best attestation of the truth of the New Testament teachings. When we read that St. Paul seriously warned the new converts of Thessalonica by no means to forget their common daily work by reason of the bright hope of the advent, we are reminded that to this day similar undesirable results follow amongst Mohammedans from fantastic expectations of a coming redemption. If a priest of some reputation announces that on such and such a day the final judgment may be expected to take place, people will seriously set to work to sell their property and will give up cultivating their fields

because the end is at hand. Many a sluggard will lie in his hut and look on passively while the rice birds consume his harvest. He knows that bitter starvation may enter his house, but he takes comfort from the prospect of another world, where he will have food and drink in rich abundance.

The vital forces of the Gospel become manifest precisely at those points at which the Moslem doctrines seem to be most living and effective. Belief in the one God to whom all things are subject has overcome the uncertainty which was felt by worshippers of spirits with regard to their thickly populated spiritual world. But we have seen also that Islam is unable to establish the true unity and holiness, the omnipotence and the mercy of this one God. Evangelical history proclaims One who is the reflection of His Father's glory, who is sinless, who has power over spirits, and who seals His faithful love by death. He, being the perfect image of the Father, the brightness of His glory, manifests in His character the qualities of the holy God. In other words, the revelation of Christ who is one in essence with the Father preserves the monotheistic conception of God from distortion.

From this it follows that the negation of animism, which is a fundamental characteristic of the Old and New Testaments, guards Christian

doctrine against the syncretism which characterizes Islam in every country, for Islam asserts monotheism without renouncing animism. The victory of biblical teaching over the animistic tendency in man is not gained by a detailed prohibition of all possible animistic observances, though such are not wanting in Scripture. The fundamental principle of biblical religion is the restoration of true communion between the individual and God, realized in a life of prayer which by its very nature destroys the inclination to intercourse with spirits. Moreover, nature is placed entirely under the control of God and thereby the possibility of compelling nature by means of magic is removed.

The monotheistic conception of God in Islam which negates the Incarnation tends towards two extremes. On the one hand, it removes God as separate from the world to an infinite distance in order to preserve His distinctness as against creation; but as a result of this the practical reality of God is turned into an empty abstraction. This is at bottom an atheistic tendency. On the other hand, the Moslem believer engages in mystical exercises with the object of magically drawing God into his soul. He is moved to do this by a desire after the one God, but in doing it he confuses man and God. In both cases the personality of God is assailed. The Christian message avoids this restless oscillation between extreme views simply by setting

forth the history of God's work in the world. This as given in the Bible shows both how far and how near God is, how He works upon man and man upon Him, and viewed in this aspect the biblical history acquires an additional spiritual value.

The hints which I have given may suffice, though others are near at hand. In place of the many human and heavenly mediators we have the one divine and human Mediator; in place of a mass of regulations sanctioned by God, we have the one inexhaustible ideal of life presented to us in the life of Christ; instead of all sorts of means and devices to attain the life desired by God, we have the one personal Spirit of God who is the renewer of our life. The living power bestowed by the Triune God upon the believer serves in fact as the helm of Christianity as it makes its way over the world, a helm which Islam lacks.

The question may be asked whether, in view of the considerations which I have brought forward, our conception of what is essentially and vitally effective in Christianity has been shifted. In any case it has been deepened. Certain aspects of Christian doctrine which seemed to me not fundamental for my own religious life have been shown by comparison with Islam to be indispensable and constructive elements; while conversely, doctrines which I once regarded as necessary for the growth of faith I have been now able to put aside for the

present, without doubting, however, that though they proved non-essential in the beginnings of the religious life of the converted Moslem, they will find their place in a later development.

We see then that Christianity has no reason to view the display of the powers of Islam with discouragement. The river of God has water in abundance for even the thirsty Moslem world. For the water which Islam offers the soul athirst for God, sweet and alluring as men may think it, cannot possibly satisfy the innermost needs of the soul. The vital power of the Gospel alone can do that, and this is the precious experience which we have every one of us made to whom it has been granted to offer the bread of life to the Moslem world.

FOURTH STUDY

By Professor Stewart Crawford, Syrian Protestant College, Beirut.

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This article is written from the point of view of one who has been in contact with Mohammedanism in Syria. Born on the mission field, the author has from boyhood been familiar with the language and the life of the common people. Fifteen years of his active service as a missionary were occupied with itinerant work in the field of the Irish Presbyterian Church in Damascus and the Anti-Lebanon. He was later transferred to the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut where he is entering on his tenth year as teacher of the Bible and ethics.

In Syria, Islam is to be seen under comparatively favourable conditions. The people are intellectually active and imitative. Commerce, the spread of intelligence by means of schools and the native newspapers, the influence of missions, have all introduced western forces into the native environment. Socially, it would be difficult to find a race more genial and kindly, or more approachable

wherever a sympathetic relationship is established. Innumerable social opportunities, under all the varied conditions of city and village life and of wayside travel, have made it possible to see into the mind of the Moslem as well as of the oriental Christian. In the college, under more unique conditions, it has been the writer's privilege to deal each year with scores of Moslem youths, many of them coming from far distant regions of Islam, and to help their minds to unfold in the presence of Christian teaching and companionship. The process is one of thrilling interest to every lover of his fellowmen, and reproduces on a small scale the successes, the failures, and the unlooked-for developments of the larger field of contact, on the world stage, of intelligent Mohammedanism with intelligent Christianity. This intermingling of earnest and intelligent forces, from the two bodies, has only just begun; but in it lies the chief hope of a native spiritual uplift, and moral leadership which will bring the world of Islam to a consciousness of the gospel ideal of 'self-surrender' to God.

VITAL ELEMENTS OF ISLAM AS A PRESENT-DAY RELIGION

Islam remains vital because it is a religion. Before all else that it may be socially and politically, Islam is a system that in its own way serves to maintain the religious life of its followers. Were

it not able to meet certain needs of the human spirit with influences that nourish a life of faith within men, it could not have become the force that it is to-day in the personality of so many millions of our fellow-beings. This elementary proposition is sometimes called in question. To all who do so we can only say that they have remained strangers to the inward and invisible forces of Mohammedanism.

Islam must also be credited with having called into activity many of the noblest forces in the nature of man. From the beginning of its history, Mohammedanism has been able to adapt to its purposes, and in many cases to ennoble, religious elements and usages previously existing. In our day, this masterful faith is engaged, on a larger scale than ever before, in the task of appropriating to its uses modern knowledge, ideals, and institutions, all of which were undreamed of a thousand years ago by the followers of any religion.

Let us attempt to set forth sympathetically, yet as impartially as we can, some of the reasons for the continued hold of Islam on the religious nature of its followers. The spiritual vitality of the system consists not so much in the new movements within Mohammedanism, which are observed so frequently, as in the natural religious value of its old familiar features. Indeed the system as a whole is capable of lending itself to a very vital form of religious

life, and in every generation is doing so, in some measure, for the majority of its adherents.

1. Among the sources of its strength we would mention first the simplicity of the main religious ideas underlying Mohammedanism. Islam creates in men a profound conviction that there is but one God—a proposition the simplicity of which has ever proved very restful amid the confusing claims of polytheism and saint worship. Islam also never wearies of proclaiming that God is great—*Allāhu akbar*—a declaration that for the sincerely religious is near of kin to the larger Hebrew demand, 'Magnify the Lord with me.' The adjective 'great' has no necessary physical or unworthy implications. For every grade of Moslem intelligence, the word *akbar* connotes all the greatness of which the individual speaker has been able to conceive. Such an elastic general term, the contents of which have endless possibilities of development, may well serve as a simple basis for a faith of growing spiritual insight. Another fundamental proposition for the Moslem mind is that God is a God of judgment. This was not only a vital doctrine for many a converted polytheist in Arabia, but is to-day the simple basis for a great part of the religious effort put forth in the lives of individual Moslems, of whatever rank. So far we have treated nothing that is distinctively Moslem, though it must be repeated most emphatically that these three great truths, thus set forth

in simple, pregnant statements, are genuine and dominating convictions of the popular Moslem mind.

The distinctively Mohammedan portion of the creed of Islam is summed up in the daily and almost hourly testimony of its followers that God is the God of the prophet Mohammed and of all who believe in him. This vital conception of a divinely revealed bond between God and the followers of His greatest prophet is the mainspring of Mohammedan fervour and confidence. This primal religious conviction is profound in its simplicity, and at the same time is so broad that it has provided the basis for all subsequent developments of ritual and doctrine. The great mass of Moslems, however, dwell simply and devoutly upon these great religious propositions, and make little attempt to develop them intellectually or to reconcile them with their growing knowledge of nature, with the history of other religions, or with the peculiar ethical problems which modern civilization is forcing on their attention.

2. The second element of strength to be observed within Islam is the success with which its forms of worship promote a certain perennial activity of man's religious nature. The oriental temperament expresses itself and its moods readily and earnestly, although usually in conventional forms. It loves to seize upon and perpetuate those forms of utter-

ance which provide a channel for the activity of its richest impulses. These often become stereotyped and to some extent meaningless, but yet, through very force of repetition, they are maintained close at hand as instruments of the spirit ready for the use of the oriental nature when aroused. And how truly and how frequently the religious nature of Moslems is called into genuine activity in connexion with their forms of worship is perhaps rarely realized by those who are familiar chiefly with the degradation and the ignorance of the average Moslem community.

We see, for example, what a far-reaching impression on the religious psychology of the Oriental is produced by the acted and spoken prayer of Islam. To those brought up under the system, the genuflections of the stated Moslem prayer and the audible utterance with which it is accompanied furnish as natural and grateful a channel of self-expression, godward, as is provided for oriental self-expression, manward, by the rich and elaborate though stereotyped usages of polite social life.

Reference should be made here to the effect on Moslems of the call to prayer from the minaret. The more artistic and poetic impression made on the occidental traveller probably never enters the mind of the Moslem. On his part the impression made is more concrete and of practical religious import. He is proud that the faith of Islam is

thereby honoured and proclaimed. Though but a small percentage of any community may be found to obey regularly the call of the mu'azzin by attendance upon the mosque, nevertheless every Moslem who hears that cry derives from it a sense of religious satisfaction that is of vast import in perpetuating the hold of the system on its votaries. The mu'azzin performs a certain priestly service for his co-religionists which is approved, more or less consciously, by every individual believer within the radius of that unique call.

A similar activity of the religious nature is also promoted effectively by the use of the *qibla*, or turning-point in prayer. Every Moslem intends to face Mecca in all stated prayer, and from this action he derives much the same satisfaction as did Daniel when he looked three times a day towards his *qibla* at Jerusalem. Here is a democratic and universal act of religious ritual which gives great assurance to the believer, not only when engaged in prayer but especially during his last illness when his bed is turned that he may face Mecca. The same symbolic action brings great comfort to the stricken mourners as they reverently lay the body of the dead on its right side in the grave, with the face turned toward their holy city. Moslem society has nowhere yet outgrown the stage of religious symbolism in which these acts seem of vital significance.

Brief reference must also be made to the religious

value of the fast month because of the heroic demand it makes upon the will of the believer. It is all too easy a method of criticism to dilate exclusively on the crude inconsistencies and the hypocrisy that disfigure the fast—defects that have appeared in every elaborate fast ritual in history. The fact remains that for the mass of Moslems the month of Ramadhān calls for a degree of self-control that goes a long way to maintain their faith in active control of their nature.

The *dhikr* worship is another peculiar feature of Islamic activity. This chanted form of service begins with steady eager ejaculations, which are uttered at an increasing rate of speed and energy until a burst of exhausting frenzy is reached. This brings each stanza of the chant to a climax, and is then followed by a brief interval of silence and rest before the chant is resumed and carried through the same stages as before. This peculiar relic of Canaanite religious activity is not a recognized feature of orthodox Islam, but is nevertheless a well-nigh universal type of usage and is invariably associated with the more mystical dervish movements which are so common. It is difficult for the Westerner to realize what a channel for religious energy is provided in the *dhikr*, and how eagerly it is employed in every time of deep religious need or feeling. These hysterical *dhikr* exercises afford opportunity at times for a whole community to

engage in an orgy of spiritual frenzy which intensifies the hold of Islam upon their natures. The great majority of the participants feel then that they have 'got religion.' Even the onlookers become silent participants in the blessing. Thus the reader may realize something of the success with which Moslem forms of worship promote an intense type of religious activity, and one most satisfying to the spiritual nature of its votaries.

3. A third element of inward strength in the Moslem religion is the class consciousness that forms a vital bond of union between its adherents. This sense of unity is being greatly intensified in our day by pressure upon Islam from without. This phase of the subject will be touched upon later. In this section it is sufficient to point out that a common outward practice in worship, and the co-operative character of so many of its forms, go a long way to create the feeling of oneness that permeates the world of Islam. Though greatly divided by doctrinal and social differences, which have always made impossible any effective political union on a large scale, nevertheless the people of Islam, as such, never lose consciousness of the brotherhood of faith as a ground of unity underlying all their differences. Any one who has seen the Friday mosque services, with their long lines of worshippers performing in unison the ritual of prayer, will realize the subtle power of such a service to weld into one consciousness the religious

feelings of the participants. Even the age-long feud between Shīʿite and Sunnite has not obliterated the class enthusiasm of Islam, begotten of the fundamental *shahāda*, or testimony to God and His prophet, which forms the vital nucleus of every act of worship.

The chief moral effect of the great annual pilgrimage to Mecca is probably to be sought in this connexion. The greed of those who direct the pilgrims at the various shrines, and the frauds practised so brazenly on them by the people of the holy city, may call for indignant criticism even from the most devout Moslem. But these lamentable social defects, in most cases, only serve as a foil to the stimulating effects of crowd psychology as realized at Mecca. The individual pilgrim is awestruck by the mass movement exemplified in the pilgrimage of so many fellow-believers. When he returns to his distant home, no feature of his experience is dilated on with more enthusiasm as he narrates the events of the pilgrimage to his friends. Thus countless individuals are drawn within the mystic spell of a profound class consciousness which is essentially religious. religious unity

Modern pan-Islamic movements did not create this consciousness. They have each sought to take advantage of it, but in most cases with no great effect on the masses. Under individual Moslem governments this religious unity may seem identified for a time with a particular political interest and

organization. This is the case, however, only because the social and economic influences prevailing in a certain area have welded religious and political forms of activity into one identical movement. On the larger international scale it is otherwise. In the latter case, conflicting economic interests ultimately render futile any artificial political union which bases itself primarily on the existence of a common religious faith. Religious zeal can not, for any length of time, weld different regions and races into a powerful external movement that acts in defiance of conflicting economic interests. Those who dream of an outward kingdom of pan-Islam, and those who dread such a consummation, alike ignore the chief lesson of modern historical science, which is that the grouping of outward social forces is ultimately determined by economic necessities. Nevertheless the spiritual unity of Islam is a great reality, and acts as a powerful promoter of vital religious forces throughout all its branches. Increased facilities for intercommunication of thought are serving to revitalize this class consciousness and render it an increasing inspiration to individual piety.

4. A fourth religious influence in Islam that is a constant living force is the effect of their sacred book upon its readers. The rhythm and the spiritual energy of its diction are lost in a translation. Even sayings of singular moral fervour lose something of their force in another tongue. But

the impartial reader can discover passages, even in a translation of the Koran, which he can see would be eagerly seized upon to feed the souls of men who knew no deeper fulfilment of their needs. Any one who has entered into the life of a Moslem people knows that countless numbers draw a simple type of spiritual nourishment from the daily repetition of sayings from the Koran; and in many individual cases the conscience is thereby genuinely quickened along certain noble moral lines.

The methods of western higher criticism are being adopted by some of the younger scholars in Islam, who are attempting a new exposition of the literature and the tendencies of their religion. By some writers the nobler and more striking portions of the Koran are being given a publicity and turned to uses hitherto unknown. The orthodox leaders are disturbed by this new freedom in the use of the sacred book. But they are unable to check successfully the tendency of modern education to create new forms of religious activity and of personal piety in the Moslem world. This new type of devotion and of ethical aspiration in the study of the Koran may have great significance for the future of Islam.

5. The fifth feature of present-day Islam that indicates the presence of a vital religious energy is the progressive idealization of the Prophet's personality by his followers. The clearest evidence of this

process is seen in the *maulid* form of service. The *maulid* is strictly the anniversary of the Prophet's birthday, and is everywhere an occasion for joyful public celebration. The term has also come to be employed as a name for a certain form of service in vogue at circumcisions and weddings or any glad social event. At these services the hymns chanted by paid leaders and choirs are the principal feature. At certain stages in the ceremony the audience participates with brief responses. The subject of these hymns is invariably the birth of the Prophet with a recitation of the significance for heaven and earth of that sublime event. The writers of these rhapsodies vie with one another in the extravagant phraseology with which they set forth the personal charms and perfections of the Prophet's physical and moral being. The adoration of heavenly beings for his person, and the marvellous response of all physical nature to his advent on earth, are the favourite themes of the *maulid* poets. They have even advanced to a mystical philosophy of the Prophet's cosmic significance, in which his pre-existence is practically assumed, and the supreme influence in heaven of his intercessory function is set forth with all the florid wealth of oriental imagery. At certain intervals in the service the assembly suddenly lapses into an impressive silence while all whisper the *fatiḥa* prayer. The lips of each believer move but no sound is uttered. For

this feature of the service, no one rises to his feet or changes his position, though all faces wear an aspect of devotion. Toward the close of the ceremony, at a given signal, all rise to their feet, and face the *qibla*, while they chant audibly and in concert a few lines of direct address to the Prophet, in which he is saluted with enthusiastic expressions of personal loyalty and devotion. Orthodox leaders profess to deprecate many of the tendencies in these *maulid* services, but find themselves utterly powerless to stem the rising tide of popular enthusiasm for this form of worship. The philosophic conceptions from which a practical deification of the Prophet has resulted have undoubtedly had their origin in the intellectual activity of educated converts from Christianity. During past centuries, these men, gradually and under a veiled form, have imported into their new faith all the mystical doctrines of the Church concerning the person of Christ. The modern popularity of the *maulid* mode of worship seems partly due to the progressive crystallization of the vital forces of Islam in the mould of a moral enthusiasm—the enthusiasm of personal devotion and loyalty to an ideal leader. That this process unfolds possibilities of marked moral progress is undeniable. That it contains a subtle element of strength is seen in the fact that it to a certain degree supplies a substitute for the enthusiasm of an intelligent, spiritual Christianity. It is to be

expected that this type of Mohammedan worship will lend itself to considerable adaptation and development, under the pressure of modern ethical and spiritual ideals.

This review of the vital forces of Islam may convey to some readers a new sense of the religious reality of many forms of Moslem activity. It is just this feature of Islam that is often overlooked, even by those who are most familiar with its external features. The moral degradation all too evident in most sections of Moslem society produces the impression on many otherwise close observers of Islam that vital religious experiences are the rare exception in Moslem life. Not only does this view commit a great injustice in its interpretation of the Moslem world but it prevents the Christian friends of Islam from making a sympathetic and natural use of forces and tendencies which have a real affinity for the Gospel.

FEATURES OF EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY WHICH APPEAL MOST POWERFULLY TO THE MOSLEM

The oriental Churches in their ancient home have lost all power of spiritual appeal to the Moslem. Until they become leavened with a new spiritual vitality they can do nothing toward the evangelization of the Moslem masses. It is very different with the Protestant bodies that have sought to influence Islam. They have everywhere won the respect of

such individual Mohammedans as have become acquainted with the life and principles of gospel believers. Moreover, it has become widely understood in the Moslem world that Protestant missions, notwithstanding their zeal to lead Mohammedans away from their faith, do continually render unselfish service to old and young. The theological controversy of centuries between Christian and Moslem debaters has no fresh power of appeal to Moslem hearers. The latter often admire the dialectical skill of the Christian apologist, and often admit that they are unable to meet his arguments, but they remain unmoved in their adherence to Islam. The practical gospel message, however, touches a new chord in the Moslem hearer. He gives little heed to the traditional doctrinal phrases even when employed by the missionary, but his nature is often thrilled by the two following fundamental propositions of the Protestant faith.

1. The gospel of the divine saving energy appeals to the average Moslem mind as a great discovery. That God is gracious when He is pleased, or when those whom He especially favours intercede with Him for their followers, is a commonplace of the Moslem faith. But that God has a great desire to draw near to men is a new thought to Islam. The rich gospel word 'love' has a strange sound at first to the Arab Moslem. Though this term usually suggests a pure principle to Moslem thought, it

does not connect itself naturally with the holiest impulses. For this reason the meaning of the Gospel is more directly brought home to Moslems by other phrases. Islam professes to magnify the principle of self-surrender to God, but it has no joyful announcement that God has surrounded man with influences that appeal to his conscience and his higher self, in order that human nature everywhere may be awakened to faith, and may be enabled to make an intelligent and loyal surrender of its powers to the divine purpose. This way of speaking of God rarely offends the Moslem, if it is not confused with doctrinal phrases and assertions which awaken the age-long suspicions and aversions of the Moslem mind. To present Jesus Christ as the supreme apostle of this practical saving energy creates a new interest in His unique personality. It also creates a new appreciation for the Gospel, by directing toward this portion of the message some of the simple faith in God's greatness that abounds in the Moslem heart.

2. The second feature of evangelical Christian faith that appeals with new spiritual force to many Moslems is the conviction that ethical interests are supreme in all God's dealings with men. There are single and isolated statements in the popular Moslem philosophy which partially prepare the mind for the gospel emphasis on character as the vital element in revelation and religion. It is a new thought,

however, to the Moslem that the divine activity should be ceaselessly and definitely directed toward the creation of character in the human race. This feature also of the Gospel rarely offends the Moslem. To proclaim God as a God of character, and His chief revelation as pre-eminently a revelation of the laws of character, and to find the test of religious truth and progress in the renewal of character forces in the lives of believers—this conception of religion, even though it reveals as by a flash the profound moral defects of his own religious system, often awakens a sincere response in the Moslem conscience. Then a new glory attaches itself to Jesus Christ as the apostle of character redemption, and in this presentation of His unique religious value many Moslems will be found to be profoundly interested.

Even a limited experience of the moral leadership of Jesus Christ leads men far beyond Islam, and prepares them to make a spiritual use of doctrinal statements.

As far as possible such statements had better be reserved for private discussion. A great and favourable change is often produced in the attitude of individual Moslem inquirers when they learn that the blessings of the Gospel depend on a humble expectant attitude to the moral leadings of God's Spirit as interpreted by Jesus Christ, and not upon the acceptance of a creed.

EXTERNAL FEATURES OF CHRISTIANITY, DOCTRINAL AND SOCIAL, WHICH REPEL MOSLEMS

The greater portion of the Moslem world knows nothing as yet of Christianity except its external features. That these historic features should be totally misunderstood, when viewed solely from without, is but to be expected. There is less excuse for the heralds of Christianity when they fail to reach a sympathetic realization of the inevitable misapprehension and suspicion that have ruled the Moslem mind in its attitude toward all things Christian.

1. The first cause of offence to the Moslem is the apparent dishonour done to God by Christian doctrine. In the forefront, in this respect, stand the doctrines of the Trinity and of the divinity of Christ. It is usually true that no amount of intellectual explanation will make these seem reasonable, or even reverent statements, to the Moslem unacquainted with the evangelical Christian spirit. The widespread pantheistic tendencies with their mystical metaphysical terms seem to prepare certain groups of Moslems to accept gladly the doctrine of Christ's divinity. In the great majority of these cases no ethical value has attached itself to the doctrine, and their use of the term is only a travesty of an intelligent Christian faith in the unique personality of Jesus as a moral revelation of God.

Thus fundamental Christian doctrines are often most misunderstood by those seemingly most friendly. The natural alternative for the missionary is to set these doctrinal statements firmly and deliberately aside, as secondary questions, until some common ground of spiritual hunger and appreciation can be developed between the rival faiths. This course is not easy for men of vigorous doctrinal tendencies, nevertheless it may be the only course which will help the Moslem masses to put first things first. The Moslem who receives from the gospel message new light on the moral nature of monotheism, will in time come to see the vast service that the doctrine of the Trinity has rendered to the Church in leading it to a truer knowledge of God, but the richer personal appreciation of the divine nature must precede any living use of the doctrine. From the beginning, frankly tell him that he may or may not accept the doctrine in your terms, but that you and he together must gain new views of the fulness of the divine nature. You have then done much to disarm him of the spirit of antagonism. Similarly, assure the Moslem that the assertion by the Church of the divinity of Christ has grown out of a living experience of Christ's leadership, and that a similar experience of that leadership may be a saving power to men to whom the doctrinal interpretation of it seems contradictory. Convince him that you are more eager to have him

feel the mastery of Jesus over the conscience than you are to establish any particular doctrine, and he begins to take hold of truth by the right handle.

Much the same treatment is possible in explaining the reality and significance of Christ's death. The Moslem believes sincerely that he honours Jesus by holding that the Christ was providentially snatched away from death. A wholly new light dawns on the Moslem mind when it is shown simply that the self-surrender of Jesus would have been incomplete had He avoided death. Thus the cardinal principle of Islam, that of complete surrender to God's will, can be applied with telling force to the confirmation and the moral interpretation of an event which the average Moslem of to-day half suspects must have actually taken place. The shrine worship of popular Islam has maintained in familiar use a large amount of sacrificial phraseology which has no moral affinity for the gospel interpretation of salvation by means of a Saviour the principles of whose life were glorified in His death. Groups of simple Moslems often accept the sacrificial terminology of a certain type of Christian address all too readily because it associates itself, in their thoughts, with the semi-heathen formulae or conceptions of the local shrine worship. In such cases they have gained no new moral interpretation of the ways of God with men. To Moslems who are thoughtful enough to be

orthodox in their own system, the moral interpretation alone can commend the doctrine of the Cross and that of the Incarnation. Then only will doctrines which seemed to do dishonour to God be gradually apprehended by the Moslem as the loyal utterances of men who had received a fresh manifestation of God in the glorious interior life of Jesus Christ, a life that is inseparable from the power of God as He inhabits the human spirit of every disciple of Jesus.

2. A second feature of Christianity that necessarily repels all Moslems is the historical denial by Christendom of all Mohammedan claims and experiences. It requires but a slight knowledge of comparative religion to convince men that the supreme and final revelation of God was not apprehended in Arabia. The claims of the prophet Mohammed, as these have been set forth by his followers, will ever be rejected by the Christian consciousness as doing violence to spiritual and moral reality. Nevertheless vast multitudes owe to the Prophet of Arabia all that they have consciously received of religious knowledge and moral impulse. Countless individuals have also drawn near to God sincerely and helpfully in the name of Mohammed. Such men know that their experience has been genuine. They infer that it is blind hostility to truth that prompts the great denial of Islam by Christendom. Modern insight

into religious psychology is making it possible for the missionary to draw a clear distinction between claims which are unjustified, and an experience which is genuine. In the Moslem controversy we now can do justice to lesser truth, while we maintain loyal testimony to that which is higher. Most students of history now realize that, notwithstanding the Prophet's limitations, God used the personality and influence of Mohammed to lead his followers into a larger and truer religious life, and along a more vigorous plane of character development. Though only in isolated centres has Islam remained a progressive force, it has nevertheless held to its early achievements with marvellous vitality. The souls of millions are still thrilled by its message. It is now possible for evangelical Christianity to apply to the facts of Islam and of our own religion one and the same standard of historical interpretation for spiritual realities. The missionary who disproves the distinctive claims of Islam by the methods of science, and its dispassionate spirit, will continue to seem the enemy of the faith in Moslem eyes, but he will be thought of as an honourable enemy. The Arab race, even should it adopt Christianity to-morrow, would continue to give a large place in its regard to the striking personality and achievements of the Arabian prophet. Let us pave the way for the final adjustment of spiritual values by projecting

ourselves forward into the historical consciousness of an evangelized Arabia, and generously insist on doing full justice to the greatest historic figure in the annals of Arabdom.

3. Very little needs to be said of the demoralizing tendencies in avowedly Christian society to which the Moslem can point with honest scorn. He has a right to despise the moral standards which prevail in those phases of European life with which he is most familiar. Islam is often held responsible for all the shortcomings of its followers. Can we expect the Moslem to judge more discriminatingly of Christianity? How rarely does the note of humility and confession enter into the Christian appeal to the Moslem world! Perhaps if we varied our mode of address and called on earnest Moslems to co-operate with us in teaching the world to make a new surrender to God, we would find greater blessing attending our missionary efforts. Such a type of fellowship would enable Moslem and Christian to study together the vital things in human experience, and would develop in each a new loyalty to the moral tests of religion.

4. This leads us to mention the fourth great stumbling-block to Islam in the manifest hostility of Christendom to Moslem interests as a whole. The age of the crusades is past, but the spirit of the crusades apparently still seeks the destruction of Moslem domination or even independence. At

least so it seems to the Moslem. In view of certain recent political adjustments, the cynical indifference of European governments to the Moslem point of view or sense of justice would seem to some of us to confirm the theory that the claims of a common humanity, and of a universal law of equity, are not applied to the conflict of Moslem and Christian interests, as the modern ideal demands that they should be applied to rival Christian interests. All this appearance of hostility to natural human rights embitters the relations of the two religions. The missionary purpose and endeavour are construed as a part of the hostile intention to wipe out Islam. It needs to be made clear that the missionary programme includes the conservation of every Islamic right, and the utmost consideration for every conscientious attempt to promote the interests of Islam as a system. The evangelical missionary would replace that system as rapidly as possible by a great awakening of moral and spiritual forces within the Islamic world, an awakening that will gradually lift all its peoples into fulness of life as made known by Jesus Christ. This is not the destruction of Islam, it is rather a transformation of its forces and its career by conferring on its followers the liberty of the sons of God. The evangelization of Islam will not be chiefly or essentially a process of humiliation for its peoples, but will assuredly confer on them new corporate

powers and opportunities. No more urgent duty devolves upon the present-day missionary to Islam than to interpret his aim so that it will be seen to be not a hostile propaganda, but rather the enthusiasm of humanity that finds its source in the living Christ.

POINTS OF NATURAL CONTACT BETWEEN THE BETTER ELEMENTS OF CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

1. Both systems set a supreme value on faith in God, both are beset by the same foes to religion in the form of scepticism and materialism. These are ancient foes, but they fight with modern weapons, and can be met successfully only by providing a modern equipment for men of religion. A smattering of natural science is bringing thousands of young Moslems to deny the invisible forces of all religion. The great influx of luxury into the social environment is sapping the moral energy of the common people. On every hand earnest Moslems lament the disappearance of religion. Thousands of Christian workers could join hands with such men as brothers of the spirit. The Moslem weapons for the defence of religion are exceedingly old fashioned. Most tactfully and patiently the Christian defender of religion must enlighten his Moslem brother as to the nature of the battleground and the use of modern arguments. On these fundamental questions it is possible for earnest men to confer with less bigotry than prevails

on other lines of religious discussion. They may learn to unite in the service of moral and religious principle without any immediate alteration in the historic position of their respective faiths. Such mutual respect and co-operation is never far from the kingdom of God.

2. Another point of contact between the better elements of Islam and Christianity is to be found in the modern awakening to social aspirations and reform. Everywhere new interests are being aroused in Islam. Men are discussing the aspects of civilization by which society is ennobled. It is becoming a commonplace of Moslem writers to speak of the vast influence of women for good or evil, and to advocate the training of girls for a noble womanhood. This is not infrequently coupled with the demand that the modesty and retirement of the veil be maintained as against the painted and fashionable immodesty of European civilization. The new and the old mingle strangely together in the new awakening, but there is a genuine desire to lift society on to a new level. Here again there is a common ground of aspirations for social reform which can be made use of in the interests of a larger spiritual union, and which will draw together in a new bond many of the social leaders in the two religions.

These two points of contact may now be systematically developed by the missionary. Some

workers still fear that zeal for social reform has no necessary affinity for saving faith. Can that old dualism be successfully maintained in the face of the modern demand for the practical moral renewal of society in the interests of a nobler individual life?

THE FAVOURABLE INFLUENCE OF ISLAM ON CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

The missionary experience of the Christian Church may be expected not only to renew her energies but to react even on her own inner development. How far may her experience with Islam modify any of her thought processes? This may seem a startling question for the missionary to put to himself, but it may contain some valuable suggestions as to the best attitude and method to be adopted on the mission field. It is only as mere suggestions that the writer would venture to point out two possible lines of favourable influence by Islam on Christianity.

1. The first is that Christian leaders will come to use a simpler and less confusing spiritual terminology. Only as one has occasion to present to Moslems the average type of devotional literature does one become aware of the extraordinary confusion of thought that is produced in their mind by the mixture of figurative terms with simple matter-of-fact statements. The Moslem often fails

to see just what we are most desirous to prove to him—that Jesus leads us directly to God. An educated Moslem inquirer asked pathetically of a lady missionary in the Sudan, 'What is the secret of the great difference between your religion and ours?' Her reply was, 'It is because we have learned to love Jesus Christ.' Another missionary, who heard the lady afterwards describing the incident, asked her permission to make a suggestion as to a clearer mode of reply. She generously asked for the criticism, which was this: 'That Moslem would have understood your point better had you said "Jesus Christ has taught us how to love God."' If any one will look with the eyes of an intelligent and friendly Moslem at much of our hymnology and devotional literature, he will see that we often substitute terms for one another that do not describe values which are precisely equivalent. We may unconsciously misrepresent our Lord's purpose by the fervour of our figurative phraseology. Whatever confuses the Moslem must to a slight degree at least confuse our own children and pupils. Mission experience among Moslems may clarify and simplify the terms in which the central spiritual values of the Gospel are set forth by the Church.

2. The second line of development in Christian thought that may be promoted by contact with missions to Islam, is the conviction that the rapid

extension of the Kingdom among new sections of our race depends upon the degree of moral co-operation that can be attained between Christian leaders and earnest men in other religions. In the providence of God, moral issues are now under discussion in most of the nations of the world. With regard to certain aspects of life a new earnestness of thought is manifested. The Spirit of God is thus calling into being new instrumentalities for the awakening of a higher life in men. Is this not a call to the Church to cultivate a new method of missionary approach to those who have hitherto been regarded as people of an alien faith? The thought moulds of their faith may still be the crude and outworn doctrines of a bygone religious movement, but their natures are throbbing under the vital appeal of newly revealed moral and social needs. No immediate purpose is served by discussing with them the religious doctrines to which mainly through force of habit they cling. Let us give our time and strength to developing a sense of co-operation between their newly awakened manhood and all that is Christlike in western men. Then the dead can be left to bury their dead, while the living interests of man are seen to be the direct concern of the kingdom of God and of His Christ. Hopeful moral movements are beginning to take hold of educated minds in Islam. Though many such individuals

have small interest in the Christian creed, they long to share the moral uplift of Protestantism. The message for these men is the moral stimulus to be found in taking Christ's point of view. Where even a slight degree of moral co-operation becomes possible there is born a sympathetic relationship between Moslem and Christian. The changed situation will bring in the dawn of a new era for Islam and the development of a larger comprehension of divine methods by the Church.

FIFTH STUDY

By Professor Sirāju 'd Dīn, Forman Christian College, Lahore (Presbyterian Church in the United States of America).

FIFTH STUDY

By Professor Sirāju 'd Dīn

Following upon papers treating of Islam in Egypt, Persia, Sumatra and Syria, the present article is written by an Indian convert from Islam, a resident of Lahore, the capital of the Panjab.

The British Empire has been called the greatest Mohammedan power in the world and India is by far the most Mohammedan of British possessions. In India, Bengal has a larger number of Mohammedans than the Panjab, but the Bengal Mohammedans are outnumbered by the Hindus, and in point of influence and education they are far behind. The Panjab is therefore the most Mohammedan of India's provinces; the bulk of the Panjab population being Mohammedans, and in point of influence, as well as on account of the proximity of the Mohammedan countries of Afghanistan, Baluchistan and Persia, the Panjab holds a unique position in India as the stronghold of Indian Mohammedanism. It is also noteworthy that the largest number of Christian converts from Islam in India are from

the Panjab. Indian Mohammedans are also non-Arabic speaking people. I emphasize this point, for the Mohammedan scriptures, as scriptures, are read and the entire canonical Mohammedan devotional exercises are conducted up to the present time—the twentieth century of the Christian and the fourteenth century of the Mohammedan era—in Arabic, a language altogether unintelligible to nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand of Indian Mohammedans. From what I know of the spirit of Islam, I venture to make the same statement about Mohammedans all over the world, except Arabia, Egypt and Syria, where Arabic is the spoken language of Mohammedans. Through their political and educational conditions Indian Mohammedans have been more thoroughly leavened by western civilization than the Mohammedans of any other country in the world, not excepting even Turkey in Europe.

I write therefore from the point of view of one who is familiar with Mohammedanism as it prevails in the Panjab. I have accepted the invitation to write on the subject of the vital forces of Christianity and Islam for two reasons: First, because of my personal experience of some of the good things of both these faiths; secondly, because during the course of my research as an inquirer (which lasted for nine long years, and of which during the first four years all my spare time, before and after

school and college hours, was almost exclusively devoted to secret prayerful investigation) although at first the whole realm of religion seemed to me to be like an infinite expanse with no visible horizon, and the search after God like an ocean whose shores are beyond human ken, I very soon came to hold the position that truth lay between Islam and Christianity and all my subsequent thought was consequently confined to these two claimants.

THE VITAL ELEMENTS OF ISLAM

To start with, it will help us to remember that Islam is a Semitic faith in its origin, its conception and its power, belonging as it does to the brotherhood of the trio of faiths claiming Abraham as their great pillar and in an important sense their founder; that it claims to be the successor and the superseder of Judaism and Christianity, and that its sacred book has borrowed unreservedly from the history of these two faiths—unfortunately making a regular mess of sacred history for lack of the historic sense in the mind of its author—as well as from the moral, social and political codes of both systems and particularly the former. It will also help us in understanding Islam, as well as in dealing with Moslems, to conceive of Islam as Judaism revived, reformed (in the partial light of Christianity) and perpetuated. With all due

reverence for the word of God we may in our dealings with the Mohammedans justifiably expand its teachings as follows: 'The law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ: but during the age of grace, owing chiefly to the gracelessness of its advocates, law was reintroduced by the great son of Hagar, re-establishing for millions of the human race the covenant of Mount Sinai in Arabia which gendereth to bondage—finally, to bring, let us hope, in the providence of God, many of these millions to partake in the blessings of the new covenant as citizens of Jerusalem which is above and is free and the mother of us all.' For the exceedingly close resemblance between the Jew and the Mohammedan notice the articles in the creed of Islam which express belief in God and in His angels and in His books (all the books of the Old and New Testaments) and in His prophets (all the Old Testament prophets and Jesus as another of the long line of prophets) and in the day of judgment, and the apportioning of good and evil by Himself, and in the resurrection of the dead (not in the transmigration of souls).

After Professor Crawford's most sympathetic, impartial and forcible description of the vital forces of Islam, I shall only very briefly touch on some of the vital points. I make his account my own and most strongly re-invite the attention of every

missionary working among Mohammedans to this part of his paper as well as to his statement of those features in Christianity that repel Moslems, for I believe that the sources and depth of the vitality of Islam at its best are not generally understood by missionaries; hence largely the failure in winning Mohammedans for Christ.

The foremost teaching of Islam is that emphatically Jewish teaching of the one God, Jehovah, the Moslems' Allah in contradistinction to the gods of the heathen, which is the one great lesson of the whole Old Testament history and teaching. Hence Roman Catholic Christianity on account of certain idolatrous practices creates great repulsion in the mind of a Mohammedan. This inheritance from Abraham's faith of strict monotheism saves the Moslem from idolatry, atheism, gross superstitions of the heathen and their pusillanimity of character, and imparts to him that sturdiness of faith which serves as a safeguard against the faithlessness of suicide and the fears of plague and pestilence. During the last few years of the prevalence of plague in India there was a marked contrast between the conduct of the idolatrous heathen who in panic and fright fled from their villages and towns, in many cases heartlessly leaving their nearest and dearest dying ones to their own sad fate, and that of the Mohammedans who stuck to their homes in the faith that Allah was everywhere and that the

time of their death was fixed, and who perhaps enjoyed comparative immunity from the ravages of the dread disease.

The Moslem's strong faith is greatly assisted by the easy rationalism of Islam, the rationalism of Semitic theism, which is another source of its strength. This leads us to emphasize the study of the Old Testament in Christian schools and homes as a basis for Christian theism. Some of the sublimest parts of this great book should be learnt by heart. The devotional life of pious Mohammedans is another important feature of Islam. It originates in the idea of merit, but it also finds its motive power in that peculiar delight and consolation to the soul which is an accompaniment of the communion with the unseen and which often shows itself in the expression of the devotee's face. Protestant Christianity in its protest against certain tendencies of Roman Catholicism seems to be failing in its emphasis on this important feature of religious life.

As has been suggested in a previous paper in the present volume, the chanting of the Koran has a peculiar effect on the religious earnestness of a Moslem, irrespective of the meaning of what he is chanting. For instance, the following vindictive verses are read with great reverence and deep musical effect in the course of prayer: 'Both the hands of Abū Lahab are cut off and he himself is

cut off. He will soon fall into flaming fire and also his wife who carries fuel on her head'; or again the following verses: 'O Prophet, we have made it lawful for thee to have for thy wives those women whose marriage gifts thou hast paid and those concubines that God has given into thy hands, and the daughters of thy paternal and maternal uncles and aunts, who have fled with thee from Medina, and believing women who offer themselves to the Prophet if the Prophet desire to marry them. This permission is particularly for thee and not for other believers.' This shows how, especially among the non-Arabic speaking Mohammedans, both the devotional exercises and the chanting of the Koran become, to a large extent, formal mechanical exercises with no corresponding spiritual uplift. It is interesting to note here that Islam does not allow music or singing; a person indulging in singing is regarded as an infidel. Chanting the Koranic verses partly fills up the gap in the Moslem's heart. But mystics, who generally fling aside all irksome demands of the Moslem law, freely indulge in music and call it 'the food for the soul.'

The strength of the social bond in Islam may also be traced to its Semitic origin. The most prominent feature here is the idea of brotherhood and equality in Islam. The following lines, quoted from a report of the address of a great Hindu

speaker in Calcutta in connexion with the recent Balkan war, throw light on this subject:

> In his opinion, the so-called democracy in Europe existed only in name. Caste in India, however bad and much maligned it might be, was a thousand times better than the invidious distinction observed between the rich and the poor. Real democracy lay in the teachings and the lofty religion of the Prophet of Arabia. He had been to Lucknow where he visited a building which, he was told, used to serve as a common place of worship during the Mohammedan rule. While going round the edifice, he asked his guide, 'What portion used to be the place for the Nawab and his family during divine service?' This query irritated the gentleman, who said rather excitedly, 'What? Place for the Nawab in the house of God? The Nawab stood by the common street beggar.' This, remarked the speaker, was true democracy which no religion except Islam, not even Hinduism, could establish. Europe was drifting on the current of unmanning materialistic luxury. So it was indispensable that Turkey should be there with the transcendental teachings of self-abnegation of her Prophet.

That the teaching and example of the Prophet of Nazareth on the subject of the brotherhood of man are unequalled in history is admitted by all, but the deplorable fact yet remains that the unchristian materialistic tendencies of modern civilization, which are shutting men out from one another on account of the colour bar and the

barrier of riches, are sapping the foundations of the highest spiritual life in Christendom and keeping people away from Him who came to establish the reign of freedom and brotherhood on earth and mixed on terms of equality with the humblest and the lowliest, the outcast and the publican.

The last but not the least of the vital forces of Islam is that supplied by Sufiism or mysticism, which by its secret teaching has coloured the whole life of Islam. No Mohammedans, except perhaps the Wahhābīs, are truly unitarians; all others have been led to deify Mohammed more or less. I had a Wahhābī neighbour who would never sing any of those beautiful hymns addressed to Mohammed which are the life and soul of an ordinary devout Mohammedan. There was a famous old devout man in the same neighbourhood, a great author of hymns, whose very breath of life it was to compose hymns in adoration of Mohammed. The devout Mohammedan is never so enthusiastic as when he calls on his Prophet, '*Yā Nabī*' (O Prophet), 'intercede for me before God on the judgment day and have my sins forgiven.' Hymns to the Prophet are sung most enthusiastically and devotionally on the birthday of Mohammed (a very common practice which is sometimes condemned by the ultra-orthodox Mohammedans as un-Islamic and savouring of Christianity), and on the day of Mohammed's *mi'rāj* or ascension, as well as on the

lailatu'l qadr—the night on which God apportions good and evil for the whole year. Pious men, and women who are naturally more dependent and religious, are never so full of devotion as on these occasions. Their whole nature is stirred up and their whole heart goes out in worship and adoration when these hymns are sung. The entire popular religion as well as literature is saturated with the deification and glorification of Mohammed. Innumerable instances of this could be cited from Mohammedan literature. One line of a popular hymn runs thus: 'What a manifestation of the glory of Aḥmad (Mohammed) is there in the garden. In every flower and in every plant the light of Mohammed is visible.' Among the Shī'a Mohammedans sometimes 'Alī the son-in-law of the Prophet or Ḥasan and Ḥusain the grandsons of the Prophet are deified. Others pay divine honour to the great Pīr 'Abdu'l Qādir Jīlānī, a descendant of the Prophet. Two lines of a hymn addressed to this Pīr read thus: 'Thou removest sorrow, thou takest away pain. Thou forgivest sins. Thou didst restore the widow's son to life. Thou didst transform a thief and robber into a saint.' In Kashmir 'the country of saints,' the constant invocation on the lips of a Mohammedan is '*Yā Pīr*' (O Pīr 'Abdu'l Qādir Jīlānī). There is nothing more soul stirring in Mohammedan worship than to hear these prayers and hymns chanted in the 'service of the Pīr Ṣāḥib,'

which is held at night and continued until early morning. Here then, we believe, is the most vital force in Islam that binds the souls of the most earnest seekers after God to what they believe to be 'Islam.'

DISSATISFACTION OF INDIVIDUAL MOHAMMEDANS WITH THEIR FAITH ON SPECIFIC POINTS

More than individual dissatisfaction with the vexatious requirements of compulsory fasting for a whole month, especially under the strenuous conditions of modern life, and the observance of five stated daily prayers with the necessary ablutions, the neglect of any of which condemns the believer to long years of punishment, has been felt chiefly by a certain school of advanced educated Mohammedans. This has been expressed, more by example than in words, by the leaders and followers of the school in a growing slackness concerning these two cardinal and most exacting duties of Islam. Of the other three cardinal duties, the repetition of the Kalima or creed entails no particular inconvenience, while pilgrimage and almsgiving are not of universal application.

Dissatisfaction has also been felt with the lip-worship of which there is bound to be too much in a legalistic religion like Islam, especially in non-Arabic speaking countries where not a word of

the elaborate ceremonial is understood. Some years ago an Indian Maulawī challenged the whole Moslem world to show that prayers could not be offered in one's mother-tongue, but no practical results have followed from this challenge so far. Prayers are still repeated in Arabic by Mohammedans all over India. Sufiism or mysticism may be regarded from this point of view as a reaction against the legalism of Islam. It is a common saying among the Mohammedans that 'true inward peace and consolation can be found not in legalistic Islam, but in Sufiism.' A deep insight into the divine personality of Jesus Christ and the human limitations and imperfections of Mohammed is afforded here. The latter in his human impatience was anxious to correct and reform the small details in the lives of his followers, to the extent of explaining how high their trousers should be from the ankles and in what fashion they should clip the hair of the moustache, whereas the former ignored even the more important details in the lives of His disciples, hungering only to impart His spirit unto them, and knowing that if they could but get His spirit and become like-minded with Him the details of their conduct would work themselves out rightly, though not with the dead uniformity of Islam.

The greatest dissatisfaction is beginning to be felt all over the Mohammedan world in connexion

with the retrogressive tendencies of Islam in matters political and social, and this dissatisfaction is bound to grow in intensity as well as extent with the progress of education and enlightenment. This is but the necessary consequence of being led by the great son of Hagar and Ishmael back into the bondage of law after having come out from the bondage of the Jewish law into the liberty of the Gospel. First, let us notice the spirit of political retrogression. The Koran lays down in black and white certain laws relating to life and property, which, since it claims to be the final and most perfect revelation, must be binding for all time, all countries and all stages of civilization; e.g. that a thief's hands should be cut off; that an adulterer should be stoned to death; that we should be guided by the law of a tooth for a tooth, an eye for an eye, an ear for an ear; that property should be divided among the survivors of a deceased person in certain fixed proportions named in the Koran. Sir John Malcolm in his history of Persia tells of the age-long feuds between families and tribes resulting from the purely retaliatory law of a tooth for a tooth. The writer knew a Pathan whose son was accidentally killed by a man and who therefore cherished in his breast, for long years, an intense desire to kill the murderer of his son; the neglect of this religious duty was regarded by the father

as culpable in the sight of God. Hence there is no room for legislation either criminal or civil or social. All that is left to the believer is the interpretation of the law in particular cases. I know of a devout Mohammedan friend who declined the offer of a high administrative post under the Government, preferring to remain in clerical work, with no prospect of a rise, because he could not conscientiously execute the man-made laws of the British Government in opposition to the God-made laws of Islam as laid down in the Koran. Hence also the justifiable feeling of helplessness and impatience shown in the matter of parliaments and legislation by some of the Turks, as being against the express mandates of their holy book and the traditions and the example of the founder of their religion. What a contrast between this covenant that gendereth to bondage and the glorious liberty of the Gospel which is so elastic as to suit all grades of civilization!

The dissatisfaction of the modern educated Mohammedan with the political bondage of Islam is exceeded only by his dissatisfaction with its whole social system, especially as regards the relation of the sexes. The most potent causes of complaint are polygamy, divorce, the veil, and also concubinage and *jihād* or religious war, wherever the last two still bear sway. Of all these, polygamy

is the burning question among Indian Mohammedans at present. From all sorts of quarters, including the conservative Mohammedans, opinions are expressed condemning polygamy as not only harmful but vicious and even criminal. There is a new sect of some considerable importance called the *Ahl i Qur'ān*, or the people of the Koran, scattered over several cities of the Panjab. They claim the Koran to be the only rule of faith and practice to the entire exclusion of the Traditions. The founder of this sect, when asked his opinion about polygamy, told the writer that he considered it to be as bad as fornication. When questioned further whether the Prophet had more than one wife, he emphatically declared (in the teeth of all authentic history) that neither Mohammed nor any of the prophets ever married more than one wife. One of the most learned Mohammedan leaders, who was held in high esteem by all Indian Mohammedans, puts on the title page of a most pathetic story on polygamy the following words: 'Listen to me if your ears are not deaf, on no account whatsoever marry two wives,' for, as he puts it elsewhere, 'a man has not got two hearts in his breast.' In a local Mohammedan women's paper, published as this article is being written, a lady strongly condemns an educated Mohammedan, who has been to England, for having called a bigamous person a fornicator and a

tyrant, and then, after his own return from England, marrying a second wife. The manager of the paper, as though conscious of the fact that such a condemnation of bigamy went too far into the roots of Islam, adds by way of explanation, while still strongly condemning bigamy, that 'two wives may be allowed if the husband gives two similar houses, similar clothes, the same amount of money to each wife'—as though polygamy was a luxury for the rich!—'and equal attention to both.' But do rich men possess two hearts in their breasts?

'Marry,' says the Koran, 'from amongst the women that please you, two or three or four, and if you are afraid you will not be able to do justice, then marry one.' The tendency among educated Mohammedans is to defend Islam against polygamy by emphasizing the conditional clause, 'if you are afraid you will not be able to do justice,' so stringently, and to interpret justice in such an absolute and metaphysically perfect sense as to make it mean that it was impossible for any one to be just and hence to marry a second wife. But the practice and example of the Prophet and his immediate followers, as well as of the Mohammedans in all countries other than India (where Hindu ideals are partly responsible for the greater prevalence of monogamy), falsify such a prohibition of polygamy. In fact, while condemning polygamy in such strong

language, Mohammedans forget all the time that their Prophet was a greater polygamist than any of his followers, for while he allowed only four wives to the believers he himself had more than a dozen of them.

The same attempt is made to show that divorce is allowed only in extreme emergency, but the constant reiteration of permission for divorce in the Koran and the example of its founder and his best friends, as well as the practice of non-Indian Mohammedans, prove this to be false. One of the two beloved grandsons of Mohammed, the Imāms Ḥasan and Ḥusain, held in the highest esteem by all Mohammedans and believed by Shī'as to be the propitiators for their sins, divorced scores of wives according to the best Shī'a authorities on the subject.

The veil has also its origin in the Koran, where the Prophet's wives and faithful women are ordered to hide themselves from all men except their fathers, sons, brothers, nephews and slaves. The same remarks apply to concubinage and *jihād.* The truth is that the roots of the entire social system of Islam are deep down in its foundations in the very life and conduct of its founder. Here Islam stands self-condemned. It has, moreover, its own condemnation in its divine unalterable scriptural basis, for the Koran claims to be the eternal, the final and the perfect revelation. Hence in the

words of the note repeatedly sounded at the Lucknow Conference of 1911, 'Reformed Islam with its advocacy of parliaments, legislative bodies, abolition of polygamy, divorce, the veil, etc. would be Islam no longer.' This inherent weakness of Islam has been and will continue to be one of the potent causes in the conversion of Moslems to Christianity.

FEATURES OF CHRISTIANITY THAT APPEAL TO THE MOSLEM

The Mohammedan speaks of himself and the Jew and the Christian as the *Ahl i Kitāb* (the people of a book), and so they are. As it is with a Jew, so in the case of a Moslem, you can never make an appeal to any earnest-minded Mohammedan apart from the Scriptures. I have seen many a Christian lecturer as well as preacher address Mohammedans without directly referring them to the Scriptures. Make your preaching or your lecture as philosophical or as scientific as you like, but base it on the word of God and keep as close to the word as possible throughout your exposition of the subject. You will find that the word is quick and powerful. It may be mentioned in this connexion that the argument from prophecy possesses a very great power of appeal for the Moslem. The story of the Hebrew nation as depicted in the Bible and their fate as borne out by their history

subsequent to the crucifixion carry much weight with them.

The teaching of our Lord is admired even though it is said to be so high as not to be practical. But the Moslem is satisfied when he is told that our Saviour literally practised what He preached. The virtue of forbearance as shown by the servants of Christ also attracts them. But offence is caused by our inconsistency, our division of our lives into water-tight compartments. As a preacher of the Gospel a man may show forbearance, but in his capacity as a private individual he may be vindictive. Hence the importance of patience and love and tact in private life as well as in bazar preaching. Control of temper in some slight detail may leave a lasting impression. As an inquirer I was once greatly touched by the conduct of a Mohammedan convert to Christianity, from whose hands one of the audience snatched his Bible while he was preaching and walked away with it, the preacher showing no perturbation of spirit.

There can be no two opinions as to the great influence of the Christian institutions for the relief and remedy of suffering, ignorance and darkness, in the form of hospitals, schools, homes for widows, orphanages, and leper asylums. But their efficiency is minimized by the Christian worker's greater allegiance to the profession than to the object of the profession, by making the profession an end

instead of always looking on it as a means for winning souls. A medical or educational missionary is oftentimes too much of a doctor or an educationist to bear direct out-and-out witness to his Master, and is apt to think a great deal too much of his efficiency as a doctor or a teacher at the expense of his success in winning souls.

The idea of secret Christian prayer, if translated into life, appeals to the devout Mohammedan, and so do the simplicity and naturalness of Christian public prayer, as well as the Christian family prayer, the last being altogether unknown to the Mohammedans. In this respect the simple worship of the more liberal evangelical churches is more attractive to the Moslem than the elaborate High Church ritualistic service which may sometimes have even a repulsive effect on the mind of a Mohammedan at first sight, as savouring of idolatry.

Our Lord's miracles when presented as the triumphs of the life of faith are greatly appreciated. But what we need more is the living faith to work miracles. Protestant Christianity in its reaction against Romanism, while accepting the highest form of miracle in the world of conscience, has unfortunately and inconsistently denied the present operation of miracles in the lower and physical world. This is a stumbling-block to the religious nature of the Orient, and this kind of stumbling-block goeth not out except by faithful

prayer and fasting. Notice also the bearing of the greatest miracle-working faith on rational theism which is so dear to Islam. By far the most convincing argument in favour of theism is the supernatural intervention of God in the form of a miracle, and Jesus Christ Himself is unquestionably the greatest and most historic and the most vital of all miracles. In the presence of Christ what sceptic or atheist can even foolishly say 'There is no God'?

The ethical freedom of Christianity and its spirituality have a great charm, especially for the Mohammedan mystic who in vain seeks in the Koran for something that is not to be found there at all, and who with the famous Persian mystic, Maulawī Jālālu'd Dīn Rūmī, exclaims, 'I have gathered the marrow from the Koran, but I have thrown away the bones before the dogs.' What he strives to draw out from the sacred book of the Moslems by the most indirect and unwarranted ratiocination is the very life and breath of the Christian Scriptures.

One of the greatest concrete attractions for the world of Islam is the realization of free strong Christian womanhood as presented by the sight of a Florence Nightingale or any of God's humbler handmaids devotedly, quietly and patiently doing their work, day after day and year after year, in the streets and zenanas of all great cities in mission

lands, without any of those fears which Islam conceives in the public appearance of women. It is one of the greatest triumphs of Christianity to demonstrate to Islam that it is possible not only for one but for hundreds and thousands of women to be liberated from the shackles of custom and to be brought from the dark seclusion of the hareem into the bright broad daylight of God's active out-of-door world, transforming the prisoner of sex into a service-rendering, misery-relieving, humanity-uplifting angel.

The last and the greatest attraction, particularly to Islam and generally to any religion, is for us to believe and to demonstrate that Christ Jesus came not to destroy but to fulfil the best and highest aspirations of every religion, to present Christianity more as fulfilment and less as destruction, to apply the golden rule of sympathy in studying the deepest religious experiences of the most earnest-minded Mohammedans, to clothe Christian truth, with the necessary safeguards, in terms of that experience (as has been already very partially done in the case of Christian hymnology) so as to bring the truth home to their hearts most effectively—in short to prove that Christ the desire of all nations is also the desire of the devout Moslem's heart.

And this brings us at once to the subject of the points of contact between Christianity and Islam.

SOME POINTS OF CONTACT BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

We believe that our method of approach to the Mohammedan should be essentially the same as the method of our Lord and of St. Paul in dealing with the Jews. The greatest power of appeal lies in the points of contact, for the Mohammedan religion is fundamentally Semitic in its origin.

With the briefest reference to the well-known vast region of resemblances in the fundamental beliefs, namely, the belief in the unity of God, in His prophets and His revealed books, in the resurrection of the dead and the day of judgment, and furthermore the belief in all the peculiar events of our Lord's life, namely, His supernatural birth, His miraculous life, His ascension and His second coming—we pass on to notice the phenomenon which reveals the great common ground of appeal in the shape of religious experience. (The writer can bear personal testimony to the fact of having met with men of deep spiritual experience in Islam, as well as with the phenomenon of lives made extremely sensitive to sin.) We postulate that the Mohammedan mind has in all centuries, contrary to the spirit of Islam, sought for a mediator and found or made one by idealization. Mohammedan literature as well as popular Mohammedan religion bear abundant testimony to this fact, but we shall here

quote only from the orthodox Moslem's primary sources of authority. Both the most reliable and final authorities on the traditions of Mohammed, namely, Bukhari and Muslim, agree in relating the following tradition which is known to Mohammedans by the name of the Tradition of *Shafā'atu 'l Kubrā* or the great intercession. All sinners, among whom, it is worthy of note, all saints of God are included, will, on the day of judgment, when the wrath of God is kindled against the sins of men, seek for a mediator among the prophets. They will come to Adam, the first man, and entreat him to intercede on their behalf. Adam will be ashamed to remember his own sins and acknowledge his inability to intercede for them. He will direct them to Noah, the first of the prophets. Noah will remember his own sins and confess his inability to plead for the sinners, and so on in turn with Abraham, the friend of God and the father of the faithful, and Moses, the servant of God, the one who spoke with God face to face. Moses will send them on to Jesus, who will finally guide them to Mohammed, 'whose former and latter sins have been forgiven.' Mohammed will then be the only man who will dare to intercede for the sinners. Three facts are most notable here. First, that prophets are also sinners. Second, that whereas each prophet acknowledges his inability to intercede 'because he remembers his own sins,' Jesus is not said to have remembered His sins, but is made,

without reason, to send sinners on to Mohammed. Thus it is acknowledged that He is the sinless Prophet. But the most noteworthy fact is this, that out of the whole human race only one man is found worthy of interceding for the sins of the whole world. Let the Moslem acknowledge this truth and more than half the battle of Christianity against Islam has been fought and won. Apply the Mohammedan's criterion of being without personal sins as a necessary condition for intercession, and you have convinced him of the truth as far as intellectual conviction can go. Furthermore, if there is only one man in the whole world who can be the intercessor, surely God would be unjust if He were not to put some clear unmistakable marks on him, so as to make him absolutely unique and separate from the rest of the world. Now by the common admission of both Christianity and Islam, Jesus Christ bears not one but five such marks: firstly, the ante-birth mark, the unique unbroken series of prophetic announcements about His birth and life and death; secondly, the birth-mark, His unique virgin birth; thirdly, the life-mark, His life of unique supernatural power; fourthly, the death-mark, His unparalleled destiny in the form of ascension to the heavens alive; fifthly, the post-death mark, His unique privilege in the shape of second coming.

Turning now to the second great sect of Islam,

the Shī'a Moslems, we find here not only the belief in a mediator, but also salvation through the mediator's sufferings. We read in '*Hassan and Hussain*,' by Colonel Pelly, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf (pp. 336 ff.) that on the day of judgment even the prophets will be heard crying aloud for their own salvation. Mohammed is represented as being in extreme distress because his people have been consigned to everlasting perdition. Finally Gabriel brings the key of paradise and delivers it to Mohammed with the following message from his God: 'Heave not such burning sighs from thy breast. He who has seen most trials, endured most afflictions and been most patient in his sufferings, the same shall win the privilege of intercession. He shall raise the standard of intercession in the day of judgment who hath voluntarily put his head under the sword of trial, ready to have it cloven into two like the point of a pen. Take thou this key of intercession from me and give it to him who has undergone the greatest trials.' Mohammed then orders all the prophets to appear before himself and one by one to relate their sufferings. The keenest competition is between Jacob and Ḥasan. (Jesus Christ is not mentioned as a competitor, for according to the Mohammedan belief, He is not supposed to have been crucified.) The judgment is finally pronounced in favour of Ḥusain, God Himself declares 'None has suffered like Ḥusain, none has

like him been obedient in my service. The privilege of making intercession for sinners is exclusively his.' Here we have the real essence of the doctrine of atonement, namely, salvation by the greatest suffering of the most obedient son of man. The principle is there, all that we have to do is to appeal to the actual facts in human experience and show where it has been fulfilled.

Compare with this belief the custom of '*Aqīqa* permitted by all the four Imāms, according to which the parents offer an animal as a sacrifice for the life of a boy or girl and the mullā tells the father to pronounce the following words at the moment of offering the sacrifice: 'O God, accept this animal from me for my son or daughter as a ransom, blood for blood, flesh for flesh, bones for bones, skin for skin, and hair for hair.'

Coming finally to Sufiism, we find the most fundamental Christian doctrine of the nature and person of Christ realized spiritually and interpreted metaphysically. We shall here quote only from one book entitled *Al Insānu'l Kāmil*, or 'The Perfect Man' (notice the Christian title) written by a great Mohammedan divine of the eighth century of the Mohammedan era and covering more than 200 pages of fine Arabic print. An abstract of this book in English, called *The Doctrine of Absolute Unity as expounded by 'Abdu 'l Karīma 'l Jīlānī*, from the pen of a learned Panjabi Mohammedan, appeared

in 1900 in the Indian *Antiquary* of Bombay from which the following detached sentences have been culled:

A condensed statement of the doctrine of the Perfect Man as given by the author himself runs thus: 'Divine nature soars upwards, human nature sinks downwards, hence perfect human nature must stand midway between the two—in one word, the Perfect Man must be the God-man.' The author has greatly emphasized the doctrine of the Logos — a doctrine which has always found favour with almost all the profound thinkers of Islam. He becomes the paragon of perfection, the object of worship, the preserver of the universe. He is the point where man-ness and God-ness become one and result in the birth of the God-man. The Perfect Man is the joining link. In the God-man the absolute being which has left its absoluteness returns into itself, and but for the God-man it could not have done so. The light through the agency of which God sees Himself is due to the principle of difference in the nature of the Absolute Being itself. He recognizes this principle in the following verses:

> If you say that God is one you are right,
> But if you say that He is two this is also true.
> If you say, no, He is three, you are right;
> For this is the real nature of man.

What greater contact between Christianity and Islam could possibly be sought than the one herein provided? There is the longing, the search after Christ; all that is required is faithfully to present Him before the hungry and thirsty souls and to

show that He whom they seek, the man perfect in life and deed, is not the one whom they have idealized against facts and who may in his own person disappoint them in the end, but that it is the Son of Man, who is the chief among ten thousand, the brightness of His Father's glory and the express image of His person.

THE LIGHT SHED BY ISLAM ON CHRISTIANITY

We shall content ourselves with two most important points in this connexion.

The first and foremost lesson of Islam to western Christianity and, in fact, of the East generally to the West (for Hinduism and Buddhism are also distinctly devotional) is that of the importance of devotional prayer life in the Protestant church. The East, where all religions originated, emphasizes the contemplative, the meditative life, the life hidden in God, the life of the groanings that cannot be uttered. The unduly speculative turn of the eastern mind is the outcome of the abuse not of the use of this exercise. What the peoples of the West and Christians in general need is more vision. Perhaps the greatest stumbling-block in Christendom at present is that of undue stress on materialism, the love of the mighty dollar, the sin of not discriminating between the values of things; and the only remedy for this sin is to be found in divine communion. This will also be the remedy

for most of the avoidable stumbling-blocks that we put in the way of the non-Christian world, as well as the unavoidable difficulties that come in the way of the seeker after truth. An educated and respectable Indian Christian who on the eve of his retirement from government service became a Roman Catholic, expressed a desire to live close to the Catholic chapel in order that his daily devotions might not be neglected. The earnest-minded Mohammedan when he approaches Christianity with an unprejudiced mind is more or less satisfied and even pleased with the practical side of the individual, the family and the social life of the average Protestant Christian, but he feels the absence of the devotional aspect. We are asked to pray always and not only five times in the day; should not the time spent by us in daily communion at least compare favourably with the Mohammedan's devotional time in duration? Or rather, do we cultivate the habit of realizing the presence of God sufficiently to enable us to live in that constant atmosphere of prayer which our religion and profession demand?

In the second place, the life and history of Islam afford the strongest psychological argument and the mightiest historical proof of the inmost irrepressible yearning of the human heart after Christ. The mighty religion that came into existence with one of its avowed objects that of stamping out the idea of the deification of Christ or any man whatsoever,

not only ended in doing the same thing with its Prophet and its saints, but it has, from the very start and throughout the thirteen centuries of its existence, had to yield to a strong current of anti-Islamic pro-Christian tendency to seek for a divine-human mediator, without which its own strong grip on millions would have been greatly slackened, if not its very existence threatened with premature decay. We cannot do better than let this truth be expressed in the words of a learned Indian Mohammedan, now a barrister-at-law and a doctor of philosophy, from whose article on the 'Perfect Man' we have already quoted and who seems to have been not far from the kingdom of God when he wrote these words:

We have now the doctrine of the Perfect Man completed. All through the author has maintained his argumentation by an appeal to different verses of the Koran and to the several traditions of the Prophet, the authenticity of which he never doubts. Although he reproduces the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, except that his God-man is Mohammed instead of Christ, he never alludes to his having been ever influenced by Christian theology. He looks upon the doctrine as something common between the two forms of religion, and accuses Christians of a blasphemous interpretation of the doctrine by regarding the personality of God as split up into three distinct personalities. Our own belief, however, is that this splendid doctrine has not been well understood by the majority of Islamic and even Christian thinkers.

The doctrine is but another way of stating the truth that the absolute unity must have in itself a principle of difference in order to evolve diversity out of itself. Almost all the attacks of Mohammedan theologians are directed against vulgar beliefs, while the truth of real Christianity has not sufficiently been recognized. Although the author accuses Christians of a very serious misunderstanding, yet he regards their sin as venial, holding that their *shirk* (the splitting up of the divine personality) is the essence of all *Tauḥīd* or Unity. I believe no Islamic thinker will object to the deep meaning of the Trinity as explained by this author or will hesitate in approving Kant's interpretation of the doctrine of redemption. Sheikh Muhaiyu'd Dīn Ibn i ʿArabī says that the error of Christianity does not lie in making Christ God, but that it lies in making God Christ.

In summing up his doctrine of the Perfect Man, the Mohammedan writer referred to above rejoices over the fact that his author is the triumphant possessor of the deep metaphysical meaning of the Trinity, and he has every right so to rejoice, for in this author we are inclined to perceive the St. Paul of Christianity in Islam. How much more should we rejoice to find Islam, the most unitarian of all religions and the mightiest avowed antagonist of the conception of the God-man and of the Trinity, drawing its deepest inspiration from these conceptions, in spite of itself. But above all, we should rejoice that we are the possessors of the reality and the fundamental source of the

Trinity, the incarnation, the mediatorship—namely, Christ Jesus the crucified Mediator, who by His cross and resurrection is able to draw all Mohammedans to Himself, through us who are the responsible custodians of this most precious of possessions.

SIXTH STUDY

By the Rev. Canon Godfrey Dale, Universities' Mission to Central Africa; Zanzibar.

SIXTH STUDY

By the Rev. Canon Godfrey Dale

It is the object of these papers that each contributor should answer the same questions, but with as much local colouring as possible; therefore it must be clearly understood that what is stated refers to particular circumstances only, and the opinions expressed are the result of personal experience under these particular circumstances. The general history and features of East African Islam are too well known to need restatement. Let it suffice to say that within the memory of the present generation East Africa had scarcely come into contact with western civilization and western thought. It is probable that in Zanzibar there existed a Mohammedanism nearer to the original than that existing in countries in which western thought had influenced the Mohammedan world. So much then by way of introduction.

VITAL ELEMENTS IN ISLAM

For the purpose of this paper it is well to explain the meaning attached by the writer to the ex-

pression 'vital forces.' It is taken to mean those religious forces in Islam which a Christian missionary can make use of as a stepping-stone to the Christian faith, because not antagonistic to the spirit of his own religion.

In Zanzibar and those parts of East Africa known to the writer by personal experience or from trustworthy information Mohammedanism seems to possess vital forces in the following respects.

Mohammedanism has a very real sense of the existence and unity of God, of the divine government of the universe, of the providential control over the little details of everyday life. The constant repetition of such phrases as *in shā Allāh*, *mā shā Allāh*, and *alḥamdu li'llāh* shows that even the more ignorant Moslems in East Africa have this sense of a providential control of each particular life. The inscriptions on their houses, the religious element introduced into former heathen customs, the religious significance attached to the principal events of everyday life—birth, marriage, sickness, death—testify to this. To the ordinary African, with his idea of a far-away God who takes little notice of and little interest in the lives of men, a creed which attaches the thought of God to such common actions as washing, dressing, or eating makes God near and real, and must prove attractive. In ordinary conversation with an East African who has become a Mohammedan it is very noticeable

how thoroughly he has adapted his thoughts to this new way of regarding himself and the circumstances of his daily life.

And equally attractive is the corporate side of the religious life. The religious dances, the religious fasts and festivals, the general interest taken in them by Moslems of all classes, the way in which a Moslem *quâ* Moslem is regarded as having a claim on others of his faith where his faith is concerned, the intense excitement caused if one Moslem of sufficient standing becomes a convert to Christianity, the way in which the recent wars with Turkey have sent a thrill throughout the Moslem population in a remote place like Zanzibar —all these facts point to a corporate sense which is vital, for they show how a common faith, strongly held, binds its adherents into one body, so that if one member suffers or rejoices all the other members suffer or rejoice with it.

Another vital element is the importance of religious education in the eyes of the Mohammedan world. Hence the numerous Koran schools in Zanzibar and Pemba. Even when the Koran is taught in the government school, men prefer that their sons should learn the Koran at home first. The Koran to them is the book of God and as such deserving of study above all other books. And though it is true that very few know sufficient Arabic to reap any real benefit or knowledge from

such study, yet the principle is generally recognized. To them religious education is of the first importance, and they realize that if a religion is believed to be true it is incumbent on the professors of that religion to direct and control their life and their calling in life according to the principles of that religion. They have a political and ecclesiastical constitution which they regard as based on religious principles. They have told me again and again how surprised they are to find a Christian judge deciding a case of law without reference to the *Injīl* or to some generally accepted interpretation of the Christian scriptures. We can have no quarrel with them for thus emphasizing the importance of religious education, or the part which religion ought to play in the affairs of life. The action of modern governments in the matter of divorce sets the Christian world thinking in this connexion. We wish they would follow the *Injīl*.

Again, even if we keep in mind the fact that religious practices such as prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are too much associated in the mind of the Moslem with the idea of wages earned for so much work done, an idea not at all in keeping with the spirit of Christianity, yet there can be no doubt, surely, that the habit of connecting the present life with the life of the world to come by such religious exercises is a gain in countries where the idea of the vital connexion between

the two worlds has been of the very vaguest kind conceivable.

And—not to dwell too long on only one question—the two ideas of the transcendence of God and the sovereignty of the divine will, grossly abused as both ideas are in the minds of the general folk, contain in them the essence of all true awe and wonder and adoration on the one hand and resignation and obedience on the other.

DISSATISFACTION OF INDIVIDUAL MOHAMMEDANS WITH THEIR FAITH ON SPECIFIC POINTS

Of course the writer here is strictly confined to his own experience. I record mine for what it is worth. There are a few specific points concerning which I have detected signs of uneasiness.

First, slavery. On at least two occasions when discussing slavery with intelligent and well educated Mohammedans, admissions have been frankly made that the present Mohammedan law on the subject (say in the *Minhaj*) is inconsistent with the principle of justice that you must not do to another what you would not like done to yourself, and that slavery conflicts with an orthodox tradition which places these very words in the mouth of Mohammed. They see that the logical application of the law of slavery, when applied to the circumstances of every-day life, does lead to consequences which the moral sense common to all mankind must condemn.

So again with polygamy and concubinage. Again and again in the course of ordinary conversation have I detected signs of dissatisfaction and listened to frank admissions that the actual results of polygamy are bad, that polygamy is constantly the cause of the breaking up of the peace of domestic life, that it leads to perpetual jealousies and often to deadly crimes. They begin to see that facilities of divorce are an encouragement to unfaithfulness, and that the children of different wives, on the decease of the father, not rarely engage in bitter disputes as to inheritance, disputes which create scandal and give rise to family feuds. And I have heard statements from people of very different ranks in life which show that at least a few are beginning to recognize the beauty of the Christian teaching of faithfulness to one wife until death. They have admitted again and again that, whatever the cause may be, it is unquestionable that Islam in this part of the world has failed to produce a type of womankind that could be safely allowed the freedom of the Christian woman.

At the back of the minds of some of the best and most thoughtful there is some questioning as to the nature of the divine forgiveness, as to the reality of a forgiveness which is largely divorced from moral considerations, which, as taught and believed by the general folk, rests upon the arbitrary caprice of One whom they regard in the light of an absolute

despot. One Moslem who believed that God is merciful and compassionate, and who, I believe, was sincere, expressed to me his dissatisfaction with a faith which gave no outward and visible sign of forgiveness, which left him in a state of uncertainty as to whether he was forgiven or not. He wanted to know whether there was an assurance of forgiveness in the Christian faith and whether there were any definite means by which such forgiveness could be secured.

Mohammedans are willing to admit the practical difficulties of fatalism. Again and again you hear from their lips the baldest statements which seem to convey the idea that they have no sense of moral responsibility at all, and yet in their heart of hearts they are not satisfied. Conscience makes cowards of them as of other people, and it is not difficult to draw from them admissions which show that their belief in fatalism is of the intellect only, not of the heart.

With regard to compulsion in matters of faith, Moslems have often admitted to me that compulsion is a poor and unsafe method of gaining converts to their faith. They consent at once to the words of the Koran, 'There is no compulsion in religion,' but then few of them are sufficiently learned to reply that the words have been abrogated by the verse of the Sword. It is a very interesting experiment to relate the parable of the tares and then

listen to their comments on the words 'Let both grow together until the harvest.'

With regard to the Koran, and the life of Mohammed considered as the great exemplar, we are on very delicate ground. As to the Koran, I have noticed uneasiness as to the scientific statements in it. Their belief in the literal inspiration of the Koran prevents them from saying that the science of the Koran is the science of the Arabs of the sixth or seventh centuries. Their theory of the origin of the Koran binds them hand and foot, yet even here in Zanzibar, where education in the modern sense is in its infancy, signs of inward questioning have not been wanting.

With regard to the example set by Mohammed, they are ready to condemn certain actions performed by him, if these actions are stripped of their original surroundings and presented to them hypothetically as the actions of any other man. But as all those who are acquainted with the Moslem know, if you say 'Mohammed did what you condemn,' the reply would be that any action whatsoever performed by Mohammed after his call to the prophetic office was performed by divine permission and therefore lawful to him, even if unlawful for any one else. We may well ask if this reply really satisfies the hearer whose moral sense is not completely paralysed.

It must be clearly understood that such dis-

satisfaction as that referred to here is the rare exception. It is very far from the intention of the writer to suggest that there is any marked sign that the self-complacency of the Moslem world with regard to Mohammedanism has suffered any serious shock in Zanzibar at present.

FEATURES IN CHRISTIANITY WHICH APPEAL TO THE MOSLEM IN EAST AFRICA

There is very little evidence that there is anything on the dogmatic side of Christianity which attracts the Mohammedan other than those elements of Christianity which have been incorporated into the Koran. It has been observed that teaching concerning the love of God, or the Christian belief in the fatherliness of God (if disconnected from the doctrine of the Incarnation), and teaching as to the power of grace inherent in Christianity to lift a man out of himself to a higher moral level and to empower him freely to conform to the divine will, are listened to with interest. The Sonship of Christ is as repugnant to them as ever and the Incarnation as inconceivable, but statements which represent the dealings of Almighty God with the individual soul as conducted on the lines according to which a good father deals with his children receive general acceptance in my experience. This leads on to the conception of God as perfect love, and is no doubt a gain.

There is no doubt whatever that the Christian character, wherever they see it manifested, does attract them powerfully. Those most hostile to us fear the power of its attraction, fear for the faith of their co-religionists who are brought into touch with it. The lives of the doctors and nurses in the hospital, the Christian patience and ease of Christian teachers in the schools, the courtesy and gentleness and good temper of the Christian controversialist in the streets and the bazaars, and the sincerity of Christian devotion wherever it exists, these attract as they always have and always will. Again and again has this been proved. It is within the power of any Christian in any part of the Moslem world thus to multiply the evidences of Christianity.

The teaching of our Saviour and the history of His life attract if you do not start with statements which you know are unacceptable. It is astonishing how they consent to much of the teaching in the gospels. As prejudice mostly prevents them from reading the text of the gospel, it is possible that we can scarcely do any more valuable work than the work of familiarizing the minds of the Moslem population with the teaching of our Lord, trusting that in this way the moral and spiritual change will be effected which must precede acceptance of the profound truths of the Christian faith.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH TO THE MOSLEM

There is a place for controversy, no doubt. We can scarcely read the passages in the gospels which tell of the attitude of the Jews to our Lord and His method of dealing with them, or read the account of the work of St. Paul and St. Stephen without concluding that there is a place for controversy in the Christian life. We must be ready to give an answer for the hope that is in us and earnestly to contend for the faith. But, in the main, such work is preparatory only, and serves its purpose best if it confines itself to removing misconceptions from the mind of the Moslem and giving clear and courteous statements of the evidence on which Christian beliefs rest. There can be no doubt that the deepest results are produced by the good fruits of the spirit of Christ. Truth and gentleness, patience, forbearance and courtesy, self-sacrifice, and spirituality in all its forms; the work in the hospitals, the better treatment of prisoners, the freedom of the courts of justice from corruption, Christian domestic life at its best, the pains freely bestowed on the education of the young, the real interest taken by those who are in authority in the general welfare of those whom they govern—all these are signs of practical Christianity and are having their effect in a quiet way. Not all,

by any manner of means, but a considerable number of people are quite capable of drawing the right conclusion when the present condition of a place like Zanzibar is contrasted with its condition under the old régime. Those who suffered have not forgotten.

The lives of the prophets and their teaching, together with the personal religion of the psalms, is common ground and affords a good opening for further teaching. Many of the psalms might have been written by a good Mohammedan. They are surprised to find how wholeheartedly they can be repeated by Christian and Moslem, e.g. psalms cvi., cxxxix. Then there is the life of our Lord, His parables, His miracles, the Sermon on the Mount. When the desired impression has been produced, we can give the stronger meat: the fatherhood of God, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and Ascension, with the evidence, the cumulative evidence, for the belief that the life of Christ was the life of One for whom the names teacher, master, prophet proved to be inadequate in the eyes of those who knew Him best. It is probably preferable that the listeners should discover for themselves the difference in many points dogmatic and practical between the two religions. Listeners should be given plenty of time for reflection. The Christian's everyday life is the best commentary on and the

best witness to the truths of Christian teaching and Christian principles. If you cast your bread upon the waters, you will find it, if only after many days.

ELEMENTS IN CHRISTIANITY WHICH EXCITE OPPOSITION

Here, unfortunately, there can be no hesitation about the answer to be given. In a pamphlet circulated in Zanzibar, which deals with the effect produced on Mohammedan scholars by Christian teaching in Christian schools, the author mentions twice the doctrines belief in which is, in his opinion, pernicious in its results. (1) Belief in the Holy Trinity, which he regards as totally subversive of all faith in the unity of God. (2) Belief in the divinity of our Lord and in the doctrine of the Incarnation. He cannot use words too strong in order to condemn the madness of people who can believe at one and the same time that Christ is God and that He ate and drank and slept and walked and rode, was weary and oppressed, suffered, was crucified and died. From some source or other the writer has heard of the blessed Sacrament, and has evidently read a more or less exact statement of the faith of the Church concerning it. Needless to say it is utterly incomprehensible to him. He cries with Nicodemus, only with less courtesy, 'How can these things be?' Most of these objections are of course stereotyped, and familiar

to every one who has had any acquaintance with Mohammedans. The Mohammedan controversialist is ever ready to plunge into the most profound doctrines; and it is with difficulty that the Christian, even in a place like Zanzibar, can refuse to answer without appearing to the listeners to be unable to answer. Silence is misunderstood. Experience also has taught me that the passage quoted by Professor Sirāju 'd Dīn of Lahore 'that the error of Christianity does not lie in making Christ God but that it lies in making God Christ' is one that we shall do well to bear in mind. Some clear exposure of such a misconception is of first-rate importance. I have heard it urged against us. In practical life, the matter of swine's flesh and wine is often referred to, the former with most abhorrence, for the very good reason that a large number of Mohammedans, men and women, drink wine in this country. They confess to it. The impression left on my mind is that the sting has gone out of these kinds of taunts to a very large degree.

It is difficult to see how the objections to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity can be removed until the faith of the Moslem in the Koran has been largely modified, because, as is generally known, the misconceptions and misstatements of these doctrines in the Koran are accepted on the ground of the infallibility of the Koran. The Koran stands or falls with them.

THE INFLUENCE OF MOHAMMEDANISM ON THE CHARACTER OF THE EAST AFRICAN MOSLEM

I am not writing about the Arab. His character has been described again and again by competent observers. Nor does the following refer to the Indian Moslem, of whom there are many in Zanzibar. What follows refers to the East African who has become a Moslem, and is, as such, distinct from the African pagan and the African Christian.

Now if the rules which govern African domestic life are lax, those which govern the married life of the Moslem are laxer still, if we can judge by results. Divorce is rife and children very scarce. The effect on home life is not good. It is quite common to hear people of all sorts contrasting the simplicity of the African mainland people with the life and manners of the people of the coast. The coast man is not loved. If he has a stronger individuality and a more dignified manner than the native of the mainland, he has far more pride and self-satisfaction. He is nearly always a fatalist, often with a fatalism which paralyses his sense of moral responsibility. He is as coarse as the African native, but with a coarseness which is the more objectionable because associated in his mind with religious duties. He is superficial to a degree, external, formal and

material, impervious to spiritual ideas. He is more honest than truthful; when temperate, and not all Moslems are temperate, he is temperate with the temperance which results from obedience to a positive prohibition and is not the result of an ethical principle intelligently accepted and willingly obeyed. The Koran he rarely understands. He is very superstitious. He is clean in his person, and can, if he likes, be courteous and hospitable. In dealing with him you are almost certain before long to desire to see some sign of the spirit of truth, and humility, and purity and love—in a word, the spirit of Christ. They need Christ, and the saddest fact of all about them is that they do not seem to have the vaguest sense of their need of a saviour or a new birth. As with the Pharisee of old, they think they see, therefore their sin remaineth.

THE LIGHT SHED BY ISLAM ON CHRISTIANITY

There are at least two ways in which Christianity is benefited by contact with Mohammedanism. In the first place, we realize the value of a religion like our own which responds to human needs which are left untouched by Mohammedanism; and in the second place, contact with Mohammedanism does awaken the Christian to some elements in his own faith which perhaps, but for that contact, he would have forgotten, or which

hitherto have had insufficient influence on his life and character. Contact with Mohammedanism throws into relief the value of certain Christian beliefs, such as the fatherhood of God, the freedom of the human will, the necessity of purity of heart, the need of a new birth and a new power to lift us up from our dead selves to higher things, the freedom of the service of God, the need of the perfect life, truly sinless, the need of the teaching of the Cross with its tremendous emphasis on the sinfulness of sin, the necessity of the great gift of the Spirit of truth and holiness, the beauty of a faith the dominant force of which is love, the beauty of Christian home life, the spiritual nature of heavenly joys and the vision of the city of God. 'The city was pure gold.' Others could add to this list, no doubt, and add their testimony that daily contact with Mohammedanism has helped them to understand how fully the Good Physician knew what was in man, how perfectly the Good Shepherd has provided for the wants of His disciples.

Christianity has benefited by contact with Mohammedanism in another way. The Christian has been compelled to think out the exact meaning of his belief in the unity of God, and he has been forced to think out the idea of the transcendence of God. Some perhaps have discovered that their belief in the providential dealings of

God has become vague and tinged with doubt. They have been startled into self-examination by the *in shā Allāh* and the *alḥamdu li'llāh* of the Moslem; they have been reminded that religion is a power that touches life at all points and at all times, and cannot be kept in a separate compartment of the mind; that religious belief should be at the back of all justice and is the true foundation of all social and political relationships; that our attitude and demeanour in a place of worship should not be that of an ill-bred boor or a too familiar child, but that the outward adoration of the body should bear witness to the inward adoration of the heart; that there is nothing in the Christian religion that a man need be ashamed of in the presence of his fellow-men; and that a man is never so clothed with true dignity as when he worships the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

SEVENTH STUDY

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SEVENTH STUDY

By Professor D. B. Macdonald

It is not now necessary to demonstrate that there are vital forces in Islam. The preceding papers in this series, all by men who are no mere theorists or book students but of long and intimate contact with the facts of Mohammedan life, have made that plain beyond all cavil. And it will even be seen, I think, that the closer in these writers has been their contact and the deeper has been their understanding, the fuller has been their appreciation of the spiritual realities lying behind their subject. It is easy to see the superficialities of a religion—its hypocrisies, formalities, inadequacies—but it takes patience and sympathy to pierce underneath it to the leading of the One Spirit and to find in its votaries, as we so often may, the *anima naturaliter christiana.*

I have no such claim to be heard as these writers can show. My personal contact with the East is measured by months and not by years. The sources on which, for my impressions, I must now draw are,

on one side, the writings of Mohammedan theologians—mystics, dogmaticians, philosophers—and, on another side, that *mare magnum* of popular literature mirroring in the ideas and events of the lives of the masses the final results, working down into the common soul of Islam, of all those aspirations, constructions and dialectic searchings. Such books must always, for the home-staying student, take the place of contact with the Moslem world itself, and the best known of them all is, of course, the *Arabian Nights.* They do not mislead nor misinform, as does that contact so often until it is controlled, and as still oftener do books of travel, and I would bear my testimony now that when I did meet the Moslem world face to face, the picture of its workings and ideas and usages which I had gained from these romances, poems and religious tales needed modification in no essential point—almost, even, in no detail. I need hardly add that to attain this result complete texts must be read. Islam must be taken as it is; otherwise it is not Islam.

But how, to such an onlooker, does the situation present itself? Broadly, I am in agreement with all that has preceded in these papers on the religious life in Islam. It is needless here to rehearse the details. On two elements only in that life, and these paradoxically confronting one another, I would feel like laying more stress. First, the prayer-

meetings of the dervishes, the so-called *dhikrs* or *zikrs*, and all the emotional religious life of which these are the public and concerted expression. Only those, on the one hand, who minimize the part which religion plays in life can disregard these its normal vehicles. And only those, on the other, who have actually, and with open mind and heart, witnessed these acts of worship and, still more, have talked—soul to soul—with men who have felt these influences personally and could describe them—only these can really weigh how enormous a part they hold in stimulating, deepening and purifying the religious consciousness. Undoubtedly there lie in them also great dangers. All manifestations of religious emotion are surrounded with possibilities of hypocrisy, self-delusion and abandonment of self-control. But those who know the theological literature of Islam will remember how elaborately its clearest and most spiritual minds have dealt with these dangers, and those who have witnessed a *dhikr* with any understanding must have seen how completely the presiding shaikh was controlling all the manifestations and steadying the thoughts of the worshippers who were taking part. Of course this takes no account of the public and spectacular *dhikrs* either got up for tourists or connected, like those at the display of the *kiswa* embroideries in Cairo, with the great formal ceremonies of the faith. These can be utterly empty of religious

content and mislead as to the real nature of what they travesty, which is a coming together of earnest minds to worship Allah in spirit and in truth. Of such I do not speak here.

Nor can it be said that, in spite of all the care, theoretical and practical, of theologians and leaders, *dhikrs* never have evil consequences. They most unfortunately have. No one can play with his emotional life without risk of acquiring the knack of auto-hypnosis; and, if of a weaker nature, practising it as a spiritual dram-drinking. The risks are there and are real, and the consequences sometimes follow. But, however that may be, the importance of the *dhikr* as a vehicle of the religious life cannot be exaggerated, and it might be well for missionaries to consider to what extent and in what forms it could be taken over into Christian worship for the use of their converts or as a means of evangelizing. That converts from Islam miss its stimulus and suggestion is certain, and the singing of hymns—especially to western tunes and in western metres—cannot take its place. This leads naturally into a large subject, a discussion of which cannot be attempted here. Briefly it is that the Christian Church will need to face the problem of the full orientalizing and arabizing of its language and forms of expression. Far too often these are stamped by Moslems as un-Arabic, and of necessity they cause an initial repulsion which has to be

overcome. Even the native Christian Arabic of Syria repels a Moslem, though he might often find it hard to say against exactly what turn of phrase his objection lies. But the naturalizing of the *dhikr* for Christian purposes is a much wider matter than any mere use of words, and involves deeper difficulties. I would only now most earnestly commend the consideration of it to all in any way concerned.

With the *dhikr* connects immediately another Moslem usage. It is the reciting of the Most Beautiful Names of Allah. This, also, has its two sides, a formally empty and a personally devout, and at the first of these, unfortunately, most observers of Islam stop. But the nourishing of the religious life on the contemplation of God is an essential part of all religions, and that contemplation has, from the very beginnings of Islam, moved 'round the names and epithets applied and applicable to Allah. From the Sunday school books and Bible helps of our youth—before it was thought that religion consisted in the higher criticism—we used to learn lists of names, offices and epithets of Christ, as these could be extracted from the Bible. A similar method has held in Islam from Mohammed himself down, and is indeed rooted in the very genius of the Arabic language. So, in the Koran, as in the old poetry of the desert, the rolling rhythms are rounded with sonorous epithets, and

the midnight devotions of Mohammed consisted in describing Allah as this and that.[1] The after generations have followed in his path, and from the fixed, stately ceremonial of the *ṣalāt*, through the freer and more spontaneous, yet also governed and restrained, ejaculations of the *dhikr* to the daily and hourly meditations of the pious, all the forms of expression are cast in this mould. Thus an immense number of names has been brought together, either found in the Koran or developed from Koranic ideas, and out of these a canonical ninety-nine have been selected which are called the Most Beautiful Names of Allah. These the pious recite in a fixed order as they slip the ninety-nine beads of the Moslem rosary through their fingers, though the wayfaring man may content himself with simply murmuring, 'Allah, Allah, Allah!'

There lies here, I am certain, a wide field which the judicious missionary will know how to occupy. When some shaikh, after discussion, says to him, 'Nay, brother, tell me some of your Most Beautiful Names and I will tell you some of mine,' he will put into such name-form some of the spiritual depths of the Bible, and thus, without controversy or even any sense of strangeness, lead his friend into the

[1] It may be pointed out that the only basis on which to work out a doctrine of the nature of Allah, as developed in the Koran, is to be found in these names. See the article 'Allah' in the Leyden *Encyclopaedia of Mohammedanism*.

range of Christian ideas. 'We say of God,' he may reply, or 'In our Book stands written that He is this or that.' To have a store of such names in his memory, cast in impeccable Arabic, of a rather 'high' type and impeccable not only in form but in that indefinable thing called linguistic atmosphere, should be the ambition of every missionary. It is true that some doctrines by no amount of outward form or atmosphere can be rendered anything but strange and repellent to the Moslem; but it is equally certain that there are many sides of the religious life where the wealth of religious experience in the Bible may vindicate itself over the poverty and onesidedness of the Koran and yet excite no surprise and raise no controversy.

This distinction is illustrated in the other element in the religious life of Islam to which I wish to draw attention. By no form nor atmosphere, save, as we shall see, that created by the Divine Figure Itself and for Itself, can the conception of Fatherhood and Sonship between God and man be rendered anything but repellent, even blasphemous, to a Moslem. This applies not only to the doctrine of the divine Sonship, but also to every relationship between God and man not specifically of Creator and created. With Moslems there is no such point of contact as St. Paul found in the verse of the Greek poet, 'For we are also his children.' Apparently, Mohammed wished to deal with the question of sonship root

and branch. Allah in the Koran is never a father and men are never His sons. And the same holds of the traditions from Mohammed and of all the after religious development. The Church of Allah never consists of His children and no saint in his ecstasy ever heard himself addressed as 'My son.' Men are the slaves of Allah, His absolute property to do with as He wills. For while the human owner of a slave is under certain legal restraints and has certain legal duties towards him, such can never hold of Allah. The Pauline example of the potter and the vessels is applied even in the devotional life of Islam with the most unflinching logic. It is unfortunate that our translations too often weaken this by rendering *'abd* not as 'slave' but 'servant.' In this they follow a similar mistranslation of *'ebed* in the Old Testament and are influenced by a feeling of recoil from all its implications. But the theology of Islam does not so recoil and no implications turn its serene inhumanity. The absoluteness of Allah over everything is preserved and that absoluteness, be it noticed, is no creation of the later dogmaticians, but was fully developed in at least one side of Mohammed's brain.

For precisely here lies the eternal paradox of Islam, a paradox which has led to endless controversy in Islam within and among those studying it from without; but both sides of which are absolutely true. Islam is a spiritual religion and knows the

relation in the spirit between God and man. Thus devotion is possible for it, and the *dhikr* and all the experiences of the saint whose life is hidden in God. But Islam is also Calvinism run wild, outdoing all the vagaries of the most *outré* Dutch Confessions. And this paradox goes back to Mohammed himself. On one side he was a genuine saint with genuine religious experiences; but on another his theology, whence derived is still one of our puzzles, was uncompromising as to the absoluteness of Allah, both of His will and power and of His difference from all other beings. So all the way down through the history of the Moslem Church and in the lives of individual Moslems, we find this ever-renewed opposition between the experience of the religious life and the systems derived from dogmas. The orthodox Moslem had to square them in one way or another and commonly did so by keeping them apart and by urging and developing now one and now the other. By his own experience and the record of that of others, including Mohammed himself, he had his real religion, and so long as that remained unsystematized and in the realm of feeling, the fundamental dogmas of his faith did not trouble him. But if—either to defend that faith against unbelievers without or critics within, or simply to state it in definite form—he had to bring the two into contact, then the unyielding theological system normally asserted itself, and his

religion became a theology of the most closely argued, invulnerable, but also impossible type. To bring the two into a real agreement meant heresy sooner or later. Some attempted it by dint of metaphysical speculation and, removed in these clouds from common sight, span ontological and cosmological hypotheses of more or less explicit and conscious pantheism. Echoes, too, from these systems tended to filter through even to the multitude. In the dervish fraternities were and are men at all stages of theological and philosophical growth, and so for the unlearned and the half-learned the too glaring contrast might be helped by some phrase or some fragment of an idea. And always there was the refuge of turning and flinging themselves in adoration before the mystery. So the life of Islam continued and continues to be possible, and at one time the missionary will be faced by depths of devout quietism and at another by a fully armed monster of logic in which he will find it hard to recognize any religion at all.

But whatever be the form before him, he will discover one kind of phrase that he can never use unless he would be met by more or less gentle negation. 'Our Father which art in heaven' and 'Like as a father pitieth his children'—these words suggest to us the most irreducible minimum of a religious attitude. Men of all faiths, we imagine, might join in using them. But the denial of them

has passed into Moslem blood and bone, and the Mohammedan sees in them indefinite vistas of controversy. However close he may feel to Allah he stands always in His presence as an *'abd.* Yet it should never be forgotten that, for an Oriental, behind the word *'abd*, 'slave,' some approximation to the idea of child may lie. All depends upon how it is used. The Moslem 'slave' like the 'slave' of the Old Testament is the property of his master; but he is also one of his master's household, under his master's care and may even be the heir of all that his master has. Thus, in the devotional literature of Islam, the word is often used where we find it hard or impossible to translate it as 'slave,' so different are, to us, the ideas and images which the words raise. Very frequently 'creature' comes much closer to the burden of the context, and though theology may emphasize the absoluteness of the divine control, religion always pleads the closeness of the human relation.

It will thus be seen that the idea before which the Moslem, even in his religious aspirations, recoils is that of generation. The article in the creed, 'Begotten not made,' however rendered in Arabic—and the current rendering is one of crude directness—must always be the essential stumbling-block. Whether it would have been possible to maintain the Christian verity while expressing the relation of the Son to the Father as a Procession is probably

now a useless speculation; it would certainly have made the Christian position much easier for the Moslem. To the conception of an inner multiplicity in the nature of God Islam has, though always finally rejecting it, from time to time approximated. But while the representation of the coming into being of such a multiplicity by an eternal 'procession' (*ṣudūr*) has been rejected by Islam as only heretical, any connexion of such a multiplicity with fatherhood has never been conceived of in any but the simplest physical fashion and has, consequently, been viewed with horror. To some aspects of this I will return.

What has now been said brings us, then, back to the question which must ever be primary, How can Christ be best preached to Moslems? We have to take them as we find them—even as Paul took the Athenians—and present the body of Christian truth so as to meet and complete their strivings. There are certain vital forces working in Islam; there is a great vital force working in Christendom. How can we bring that force—which is Christ—to bear on those forces which are the workings and yearnings of the human spirit fostered and guided, as we must believe, by that Divine Spirit which has never left itself without a witness within us? These strivings within Islam have been variously coloured, biassed and stunted by Islam itself with its strange inheritance from we know not what Christian heresy.

And it is there, in these imposed modifications, that the taking of Moslems as we find them enters. What do they, as Moslems, think of Christ? How far are they on the road towards Him? How does the thought of Him, if at all, already affect them? To that I wish now to turn.

So far as these questions are theological, the answer to them is easy; so far as they are religious, it is very difficult. The Moslem doctrine of the nature of Christ can be put in half a dozen sentences. He is a semi-angelic semi-human being, but of sinless flesh and nature; a new creation by Allah springing from Allah's direct creative word as did Adam and hence called a Word from Allah, and even the Word of Allah. But He is also specifically called an *'abd*, a creature. His mother was also conceived without sin in order that even on the human side He might have no taint of inheritance. He is called a Spirit from Allah and even the Spirit of Allah, just as are the angels. His life on earth was surrounded with miracle and in His birth-body Allah took Him to one of the heavens where He now is and whence He shall come to rule the world in the last days. But the eternal Sonship is rejected with the death on the cross, the resurrection and rule at God's right hand. Nor does He return to judge the quick and the dead. In fact, the Islamic doctrine leaves us questioning why this semi-angelic being came to earth at all. Some positive element

must have been dropped by Mohammed from the system which was taught to him. Jesus in it was evidently a second Adam, but His theological relationship to the first has vanished. He must have been sent for a purpose; that, too, has vanished. The missionary might ask some arousing questions on these points. He might ask, too, what was involved in His being a special manifestation in time of the eternal Word of Allah. It may be answered that all things are products of Allah's creative Word. But in the case of Jesus stress is laid upon a certain uniqueness—what was it? *Up to a certain point Islamic doctrine leads straight to a Logos conception of the nature of Christ; but at that point it stops sharply.*

Yet the Logos idea has found an entrance into Islamic theology, and that in two forms. The doctrine concerning the Koran is that it represents upon earth the Word or Speech (*Kalām*) which has been with Allah from all eternity, by which He made the worlds. This, it may be said roughly, is our Nicene form of the Logos doctrine. On the other hand, the Arian form appears in the doctrine of the person of Mohammed. He is the first of all created beings, and for his sake the worlds were created. Both of these ideas are exceedingly vital forces in Islam to-day and show the craving of the human mind for some such mediating conception—some link between God and man. Thus reformers

in Islam now tend to rally to one or other of two cries: either, 'Back to the Koran!' or 'Back to Mohammed!'

Urging to the first cry are many forces. For all Arabic speakers, the Koran is peculiarly their book. It is the supreme flowering of the genius of the language. No criticism of it by an outsider is ever heard with patience. And, in truth, there are in it, here and there, passages of haunting music. Mohammed, it should never be forgotten, was a poet of the primitive, incoherent, ecstatic type before he was a prophet. So its cadences still intoxicate and endless repetitions have not staled its melodies. In the ears of the Moslem, schooled in them from infancy, they constantly ring, and the book witnesses to itself of its uniqueness. And when to this is added that it is a divine book; that in it Allah speaks to man as with His own speech, a Quality of His from all eternity—the theological statements of this vary but such is their substance—then that the Koran should be a rallying point for all Moslems is easily intelligible. The life of Mohammed, the bearer, may be smirched; but the divine Word abides untouchable. Patriotism, beauty, habit, faith, all unite to protect it. In face of this—a most vital fact with all, especially with educated Moslems—I can only repeat what I have said above, that a heavy burden of duty lies on all concerned to see that the Christian message

is clad in a garb that will do it no discredit; that the supreme magic for the Arabic-speaking peoples —and by their proverb a lawful magic—the magic of language, is not disregarded.

But to the more emotional and less educated Moslems, especially to those who, born in non-Arabic lands, cannot so intoxicate themselves on the rhythms of the book of the Arabs, the more human interest of the figure of Mohammed himself appeals. And so it has come about that he is often practically deified, however contrary to exact Islam and to the Prophet's own declarations such an apotheosis may be. It is a question of temperament and environment, and the missionary need not be surprised at any form he may meet and must not think that the doctrine of his district is universal Islam. We have had our time of bibliolatry, and we have now, apparently, a time of speaking of Jesus and addressing Him in prayer as though He were the only person in the Godhead. These Moslem vagaries should lead us to be only the more careful as to the forms of our theological statements. We sometimes think we can get along without a theology and upon religious experience alone. Theology thus cast out avenges itself by coming back in perverted forms.

But I return to the second and more difficult side of my question on the Moslem attitude towards Christ. What place does He hold religiously

among them? What part does He play in their lives? Is He in any respect a vital force there? I fear the answer must be that, for the great mass of Moslems, He is not. On that side there is little or nothing from which to begin. He does not even seem to have struck the popular imagination as has the mysterious al Khiẓr. He is theologically a similarly mysterious figure among the prophets, and if actual physical meetings with Him in this middle earth cannot be looked for by Moslems, as they look to meet al Khiẓr, visions of Him in dream might be expected. Yet the evidence is that these occur very rarely and almost only among dervishes and under peculiar and predisposing circumstances. It is true that there are certain stock anecdotes about Him current in theological books of edification. In these His unearthly, angelic nature appears. He possesses peculiarly the power of raising the dead. His words are of strange wisdom and His conduct is sinless, or rather, His life moves in a sphere in its nature apart from that of men. Generally, it may be said that Islam, while acknowledging theologically His rank and treating Him at all times with great respect, does not seem in its religious or worldly need to turn towards Him. Under such stress it seeks its local saints or al Khiẓr or Mohammed himself, while Shī'ites, of course, turn to the Imāms. In the Last Days he will play a large but undefined part with which the

religious Moslem does not greatly trouble himself unless he aspires to be the Mahdī. Then he must determine what *rôle* falls to him and what to ʻĪsā.

Yet in this, as in all phases of religion as opposed to theology, and especially in the religion of the masses, it is necessary to speak with caution. In Lady Burton's time at Damascus there arose among the Shādhilite dervishes a strange movement produced by visions of Jesus. Further, the broader minded generally have shown a tendency to play Him off against Mohammed, by way of vindicating the universality of religion and the common value of all religions. This has occurred more among Turks and Persians and everywhere only among advanced mystics. It is possible also that in certain localities more closely connected with His earthly life such religious influence may be found. But I know of no evidence to that purport. Tales are, of course, told to tourists, notably that He and Mohammed will judge together at the Last Day, one on the one side and the other on the other of the valley of Kidron; but these seem to be fictions of dragomans, and are at best too completely in the teeth of all sound doctrine to be at all widely current among Moslems. That, on that day, none shall judge save Allah Himself is a fundamental article of the faith.

On another conception, to which attention has already been drawn in more than one of the

preceding papers, I would wish to lay emphasis. There can be no question that there has existed and still exists, widespread among Moslems, a strong feeling of the need of a mediator, an intercessor between men and God. This has shown itself in the doctrine which has gradually grown up, apparently of necessity, and which is in the teeth of statements of Mohammed himself, that Mohammed will intercede for his people at the Last Day and secure their entrance as a whole into paradise. Only a single wretched man will be left outside to satisfy God's justice and keep the letter of His threats. He is, as it were, a scapegoat, and his fate is a ghastly parody on some forms of the Christian doctrine of the Atonement. This is intercession on behalf of the people in general and, as such, belongs to Mohammed alone. No other prophet, even, has a right to it, and he only by the grace of Allah.[1] But all through the religious life of Islam runs the idea of intercession on behalf of individuals by individuals who have acquired merit in the eyes of Allah. This is what lies behind and conditions the so-called 'worship' of saints, which is at bottom

[1] I pass over the interesting word *wajīh*, applied once to Jesus in the Koran and explained by some commentators as meaning 'intercessor in the world to come.' It is of more importance for Mohammed's idea of Jesus than for the position of Jesus in Islam.

prayer to them for the exertion of their personal influence with Allah. Among Shī'ites, as has been pointed out by one writer above, this has developed into a doctrine of a virtue lying in the shed blood of the slain Ḥusain and his family. There is in it a specific claim upon Allah. But this is only a special case, sharpened by Shī'ite emotion, of a general Moslem attitude towards the sufferings of the saints. Theologically, Islam would never admit the doctrine of a treasury of merit; for in it, no more than in Calvinism, can the human race by any possibility acquire or hold merit in the eyes of God. But religiously the idea certainly appears, and in the lives of the saints we find them again and again exercising flat pressure upon Allah. Of course there might be here some fine distinguishing between the ideas of influence with Allah—as being the Friends of Allah (*auliyā*)—and rights over Allah, and theologians would undoubtedly draw such a distinction. But in the attitudes and ideas of the religious life it vanishes.

To that strange book, *al Insāna'l kāmil*, with its approximations to Christian positions, allusion has also been made in a preceding paper, and it would be well if the book could have a more careful study than has yet fallen to it. But such phenomena keep appearing and disappearing in the multiform and almost inchoate mass of Ṣūfī ideas. The human soul, when unbiassed by systems

and prejudices, is naturally Christian, and such freedom has been the mark of Sufiism at all times. An outstanding example which all missionaries should study most carefully is given by the case of al Ḥallāj. The book upon him by M. Louis Massignon marks an epoch in our understanding of earlier Moslem mysticism.

We come back, then, again to our question. All things being so, how can Christ be best preached to Moslems? Almost one is impelled to answer, Do not preach Him; let Him Himself do His own work. If ever, it is face to face with Islam that the preaching of man is foolishness. The path to any formal presentation of Christian doctrine is sown with misunderstanding and prejudice. Yet the figure of Christ, simply presented as He lived and spoke, seems to overcome these. An experience which all, probably, who have worked among Moslems have had, abundantly proves this. I have spoken above of the Moslem horror before the idea of the divine paternity. But it is peculiarly in the Johannine writings that this 'begotten' aspect of the Son is emphasized. Without these that word and its circle of ideas would probably have played a much smaller part in the development of Christian doctrine. And yet—and to this I think all missionaries will bear witness—it is precisely the Gospel according to John which attracts and holds the Moslem who has become a seeker for something

which his own religion cannot give him. It is true that such men are all mystics and that the mysticism of the book appeals to them. But it is the mystical atmosphere of the great Figure itself which overcomes and makes possible the words that are used.

And even this very difficulty may be turned to account. In Philippians ii. 7, we read that He took the form of a slave, *δοῦλος*—an *'abd*, a 'creature'; it is exactly the Koranic word for Jesus. Can we, then, with Moslems begin at that point? Can we develop all that lies in that word *δοῦλος* and recognize all that a Moslem thinks when he uses the word *'abd?* A multitude of the most essential and germinative conceptions of Christianity connect with that aspect of Jesus, and they are those which Islam peculiarly needs. I do not develop them here. That has been done already in more than one of the preceding papers. Then, when that Figure in its human life of service and submission has once been brought clearly into view and stands up concrete and real with its testimony, its individual summons and its promise, its mysterious background of relationship to the Divine in time and in eternity will far more easily follow. All the Logos ideas of Islam can be related to it and thereby carried to their true measure and end. The Moslem will pass beyond that strange check which the Koran imposes, and will be able to connect with Christ

those other stunted growths from the same stock which Islam has related to the Koran and to Mohammed. One forward step, especially, must be made. In dealing with the Speech or Word (*Kalām*) of Allah Islam has limited itself very carefully to one side only of the Logos conception. Its divine Logos is always *oratio* and no conception of *ratio* is allowed to enter. This is very marked and appears to spring from another conception fundamental to Islam, that Allah must be left a pure, unlimited Will—unlimited even by any process of reason in Himself. That would subordinate Allah to something else and make His attitudes and acts less immediate and uncaused. Just as right and wrong depend upon His will, so He must be free also from the laws of thought. I do not remember ever having met with a precise statement of this; but it is involved in the care with which reason (*'aql*) is kept out of all definitions and descriptions of Allah. But this, be it always remembered, is theology, and the religious life of experience, on the other hand, has to think and speak of Allah in terms of the aspects under which it has known Him. It should not, therefore, be difficult, at the cost of whatever metaphysical confusion, to reintroduce thought into the Moslem conception of the Divinity and so far break up that impossible Unity. The Word of Allah will cease to be a simple objectified

command (*amr*), like the Jewish *Memrā*, and will again, like the older Hebrew *Khokmāh*, be that Wisdom in which and by which God does all things.

I am very conscious that in what I have now said there is more of theology and less of vital experience than the title of this series of articles would seem to demand. Yet that has sprung from the very nature of the case. I am a student of Moslem theology; but only an onlooker upon Moslem life. Lest any, however, should mistake my attitude in the broad matter, let me now finally state some practical propositions which seem to me essential. I trust that missionaries will forgive an outsider if he casts these, for directness, in imperative form.

(1) As much as is in any way possible let the Bible, and especially the figure of Christ in the gospels, speak for themselves.

(2) As much as is in any way possible avoid controversy, however friendly. Turn it with an answer which will show that Christianity too has beneath it a reasoned metaphysical system.

(3) As much as is in any way possible cultivate religious conversation with Moslems and try to understand their religious life. The reading of their devotional and mystical books will greatly help in this.

(4) As much as is in any way possible study

the theological system of Islam in the treatises of its theologians.

(5) Be thus prepared, when the genuine inquirer who has been attracted by Christ and has read the Bible brings forward theological difficulties, to understand these and his mind in general and to enter most fully into theological subtleties. To us they may seem unreal; to him, with his training, they are vital.

(6) Never be surprised at the doctrine or the aspect of Christianity which seems most to appeal to any individual Moslem. He must begin where he can. Avoid, therefore, fixed 'easy methods.' I knew one man who became a sincere Christian with a real grasp of Christian doctrine and who began by being impressed with the historical continuity of the books of Samuel and Kings. Above all, do not think that there must be a theological sense of sin. Many Moslems find rest in Christ as a solution of the problems of the world and of the mystery of the universe. Their Christ is cosmic, but none the less real.

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